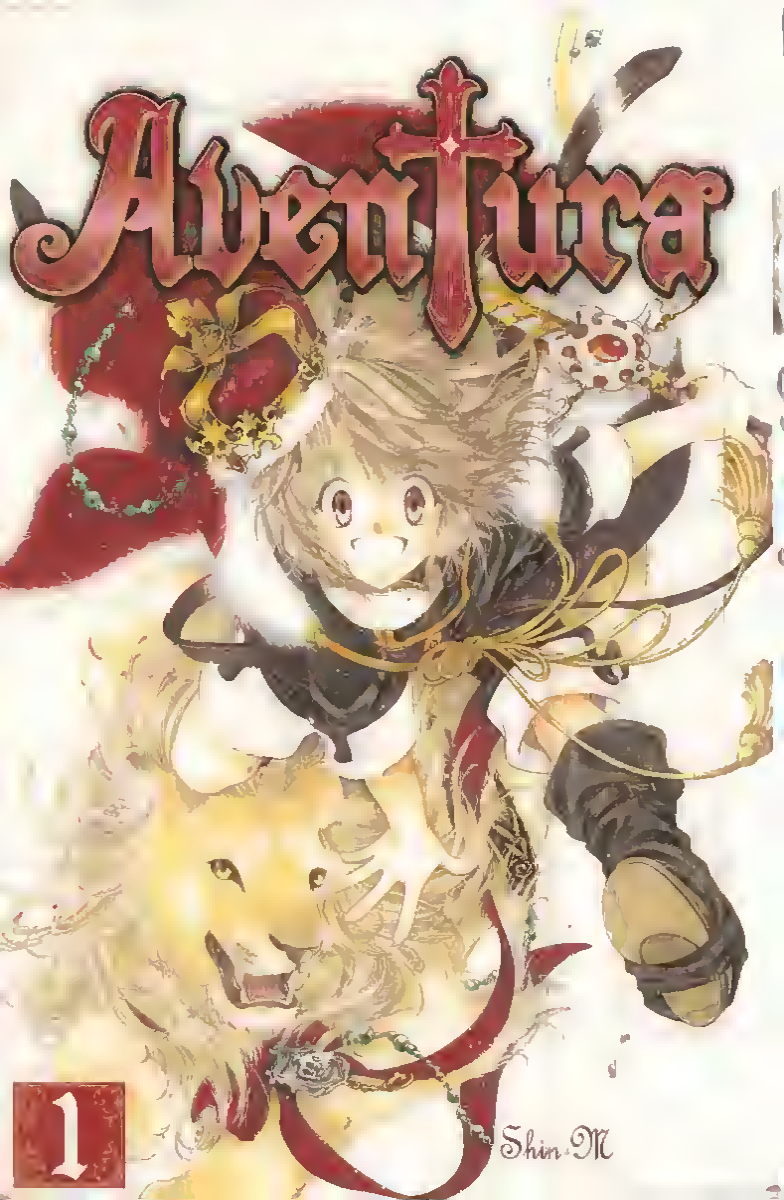
Aventura



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Shin M

Aventura

Aventura

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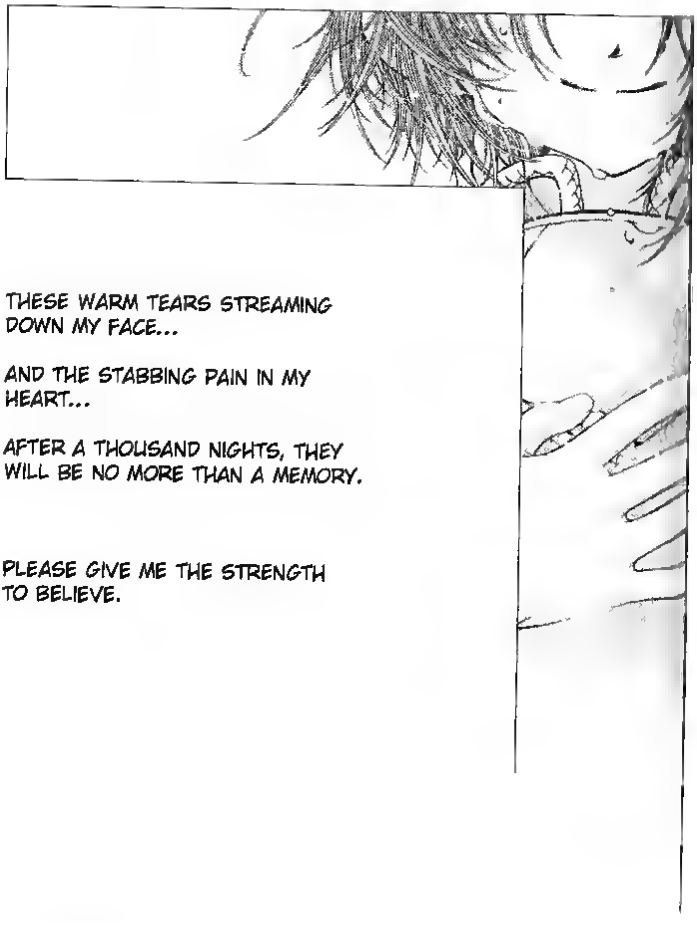
SHIN MIDORIKAWA

TRANSLATED AND ADAPTED BY ELINA ISHIKAWA

LETTERED BY NORTH MARKET STREET GRAPHICS

BALLANTINE BOOKS • NEW YORK

Aventura


THESE WARM TEARS STREAMING DOWN MY FACE...
AND THE STABBING PAIN IN MY HEART...
AFTER A THOUSAND NIGHTS, THEY WILL BE NO MORE THAN A MEMORY.
PLEASE GIVE ME THE STRENGTH TO BELIEVE.

Aventura 1

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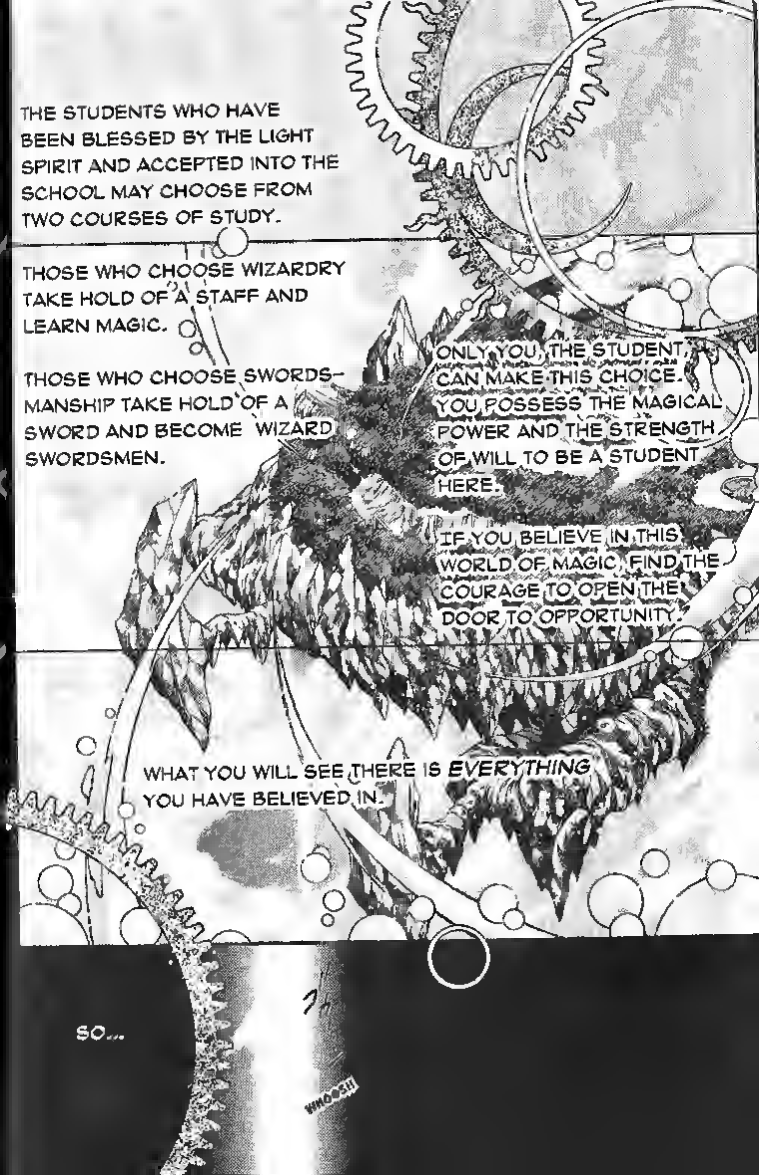
ACROSS THREE SKIES, FIVE CONTINENTS, AND SEVEN SEAS, IN THE MIDDLE OF THIS EARTH, THERE IS A SCHOOL—THE GAIUS SCHOOL OF WITCHCRAFT AND WIZARDRY.

IT IS SAID THAT LONG AGO, IN ANCIENT TIMES, THIS SCHOOL WAS CREATED BY THE POWER OF THE FLOATING ROCK AND THE FLYING ROCK, A POWER WIELDED BY THE TWO WIZARDS WHO SURVIVED THE LAST BATTLE. THIS WAS WRITTEN IN THE PROPHETIC *BOOK OF PREEMERGENCE AND PREEXISTENCE:*

THE SCHOOL IS HONORED BY THE GODS FOR NURTURING NEW GENERATIONS OF WITCHES AND WIZARDS. SURROUNDED BY FOUR ELEMENTAL SPIRITS – FIRE, WATER, WIND, AND EARTH – AND UNDER THE PROTECTION OF THE LIGHT SPIRIT, THIS ACADEMY HAS ENDURED ON THIS MOTHER EARTH FOR MANY CENTURIES...


THE STUDENTS WHO HAVE BEEN BLESSED BY THE LIGHT SPIRIT AND ACCEPTED INTO THE SCHOOL MAY CHOOSE FROM TWO COURSES OF STUDY.
THOSE WHO CHOOSE WIZARDRY TAKE HOLD OF A STAFF AND LEARN MAGIC.
THOSE WHO CHOOSE SWORDSMANSHIP TAKE HOLD OF A SWORD AND BECOME WIZARD SWORDSMEN.
ONLY YOU, THE STUDENT CAN MAKE THIS CHOICE. YOU POSSESS THE MAGICAL POWER AND THE STRENGTH OF WILL TO BE A STUDENT HERE.
IF YOU BELIEVE IN THIS WORLD OF MAGIC, FIND THE COURAGE TO OPEN THE DOOR TO OPPORTUNITY.
WHAT YOU WILL SEE THERE IS EVERYTHING YOU HAVE BELIEVED IN.
SO...
WHOOSH!!

...BELIEVE IN YOURSELF.
TAP
TAP
TAP
NEVER STOP BELIEVING.
HEY, DO YOU KNOW HIM?
...OH, YOU MEAN LEWIN RANDIT? EVERYONE KNOWS WHO HE IS.
IDIOT! DON'T SAY HIS NAME!
ALWAYS LOVE THE PERSON...
THEY SAY HE HAS NO TALENT FOR MAGIC. IT'S A MISTAKE HE EVEN GOT INTO THIS SCHOOL.
OH, A BRIBE?
NO, I HEARD HE'S SO POOR THAT HE CAN'T EVEN AFFORD A SHEATH.
PFFT!
Haha
...YOU'RE DESTINED TO BECOME.
—SPEAK OF THE DEVIL, HERE COMES THE REDHEADED LOSER AND HIS SWORD...

1st Bell: The Red-Haired Boy

SWORDSMANSHIP CLASS PRACTICE FIELD
CLANG
CLANG
CLANG
CLANG
CLANG
CHATTER
HEY...
DARWELL'S BEING PUSHED BACK.
ALIGH...!!
HUH? REALLY?

ハァ...
WOOSH
...DARN ...IT!
TAKE... THIS!!
!!!
CLANG
WOOSH
WOOSH
YAH!
DID HE GET HIM?!

...HEH!
WE JUST LEARNED THAT THE SWORD FORCE WAVE SHOULD BE PROJECTED UPWARD!
OR WHAT?
LOSER-KUN WAS SO BUSY SWINGING HIS BIG SWORD HE FORGOT TO PAY ATTENTION?
HAHAHAHA
FSHHH
FAREWELL TURKFAN...
..TURKFAN, WATCH YOUR MOUTH. THE FIGHT ISN'T OVER YET.
HUH?
WHOOSH
WHOAAA!
AH.

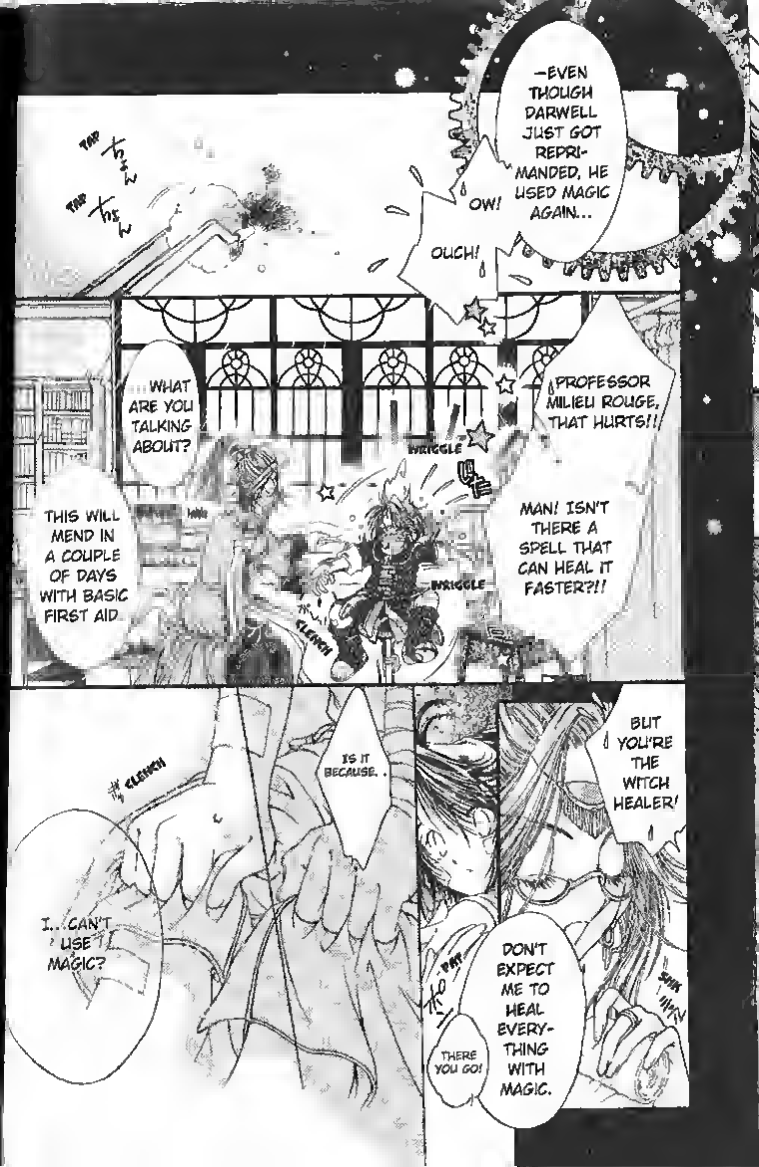
CLANG
OH
WHOAAA!!

AUGH!
...SORRY.
THE EXPLOSION WAS SO LOUD I DIDN'T HEAR YOU.
...I'D LIKE TO HEAR YOU SAY THAT AGAIN, JERK!
...O-
OKAY, OKAY, I GIVE UP!
Humph!
...YOU'RE ALL TALK!
HUH...?!

LEWIN RANDIT, IT SEEMS YOU HAVEN'T FULLY UNDERSTOOD THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THIS CLASS.
...EVEN IN PRACTICE MANEUVERS, NEVER RAISE YOUR SWORD OVER YOUR SHOULDER.
...PROFESSOR QUALFER!!
HEY! LET GO OF ME! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
...THEN WHAT ABOUT HIM?!!
HE USED MAGIC WHEN HE WASN'T SUPPOSED TO!!
A WAVE NATURALLY EMITTED BY A MAGICALLY ENHANCED SWORD IS PERMISSABLE
THAT WAS A SWORD FORCE WAVE, NOT MAGIC.

GRAB
CLENCH
NO WAY! HOW—
RANDIT...
...RANDIT, I MAKE THE RULES AND CREATE THE TEXTBOOK FOR THIS CLASS.
IF YOU CHOOSE TO DISOBEY ME, SO BE IT. I WON'T STOP YOU.
LEAVE THIS SCHOOL RIGHT NOW!
GRR
...FAIR ENOUGH.
YOU'VE PASSED TODAY'S TEST.
RIP
TAKE YOUR SWORD AND GO TO THE INFIRMARY.
.....?
FLIP

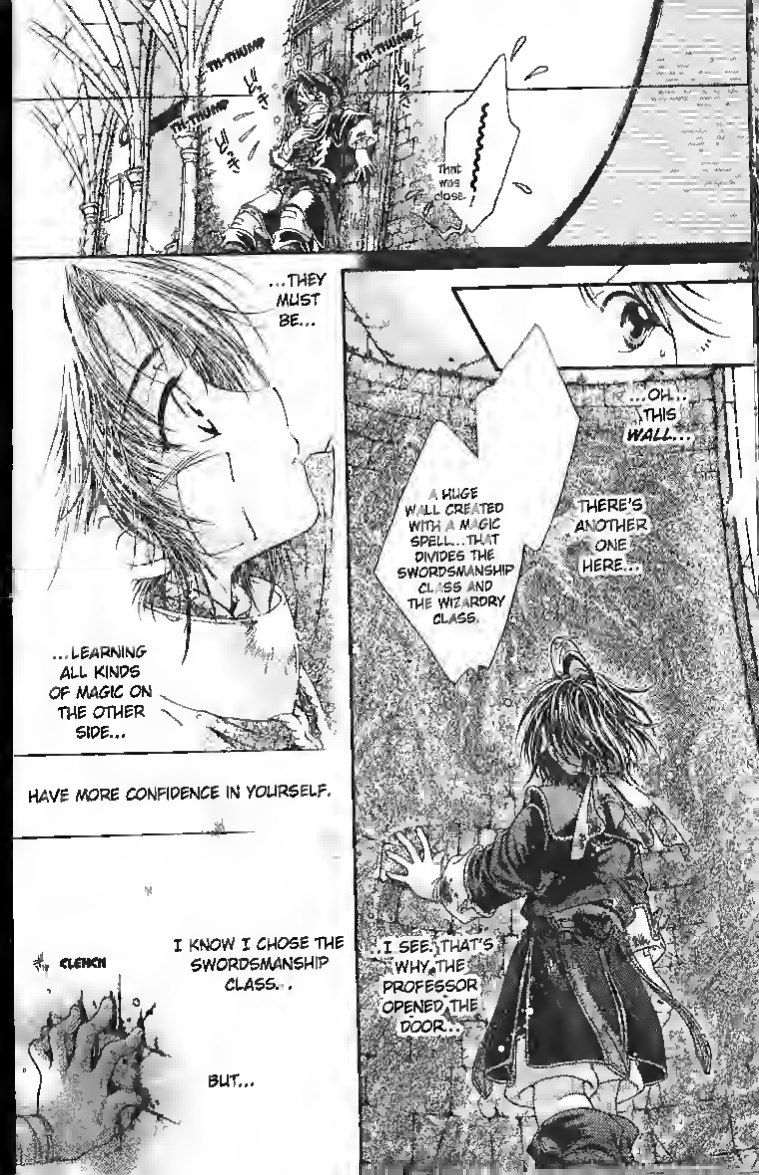
OH, TURKFAN I HAVE AN ORDER FOR YOU AS WELL.
HE NEEDS TO BE PUNISHED!!
GRR
HEY! WAIT A MINUTE, PROFESSOR!!
HOP
HE HELD HIS SWORD TO MY THROAT! HE ALMOST KILLED ME!!
YOU HID A TRUE VACUUM SPELL BEHIND THAT WAVE.
AS PUNISHMENT, RUN FIFTY LAPS BETWEEN HERE AND SCHOOL!
FLINCH
!!?
INTENTIONALLY (LAUGHS)
HN?
FLINCH
CHATTER CHATTER CHATTER
OH, NOTHING!!
THE PROFESSOR'S SPECIAL HYPNOSIS MAGIC!
IT'S CONTROL SPIRIT!
H-Help!!
I-I'M RUNNING!
W-WHAT'S HAPPENING?!
FLUSTER
FLUSTER
W-W-WHOAAA!!
EEK!
MASTER FARWELL?!


—EVEN THOUGH DARWELL JUST GOT REPRIMANDED, HE USED MAGIC AGAIN...
OW!
OUCH!
TAP TAP
PROFESSOR MILIEU ROUGE, THAT HURTS!!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
WRIGGLE
WRIGGLE
MAN! ISN'T THERE A SPELL THAT CAN HEAL IT FASTER?!!
THIS WILL MEND IN A COUPLE OF DAYS WITH BASIC FIRST AID.
CLENCH
BUT YOU'RE THE WITCH HEALER!
IS IT BECAUSE. .
CLENCH
I...CAN'T USE MAGIC?
DON'T EXPECT ME TO HEAL EVERYTHING WITH MAGIC.
SHRK
PAT
THERE YOU GO!

PLEASE, PROFESSOR. TELL ME THE TRUTH.
BECAUSE I. .
IS THAT WHY YOU CAN'T USE A RECOVERY SPELL ON ME?
OR IS IT THAT YOU REFUSE TO USE IT ON ME?
..THAT'S WHAT EVERY-ONE TELLS ME.
PAT

I'D NEVER TREAT MY PRECIOUS STUDENTS UNFAIRLY.
THAT'S NOT TRUE, LEWIN
PFFT!
IF EVERYTHING COULD BE HEALED WITH MAGIC, WOULD WE NEED MEDICINE?
IF WE DIDN'T NEED MEDICINE, WOULD WE NEED HERBS?
IF WE DIDN'T NEED FOOD, WOULD WE NEED THE PLANTS AND ANIMALS?
IF WE DIDN'T NEED SLEEP, WOULD WE NEED NIGHT AND MORNING?
LEWIN, WHAT I'M TRYING TO SAY IS, USING MAGIC TO SOLVE ALL OUR PROBLEMS MEANS. .
..MAKING NATURE UNNECESSARY
SO...IF YOUR INJURY...
...WAS SOMETHING SERIOUS LIKE A BROKEN BONE OR HEAVY BLEEDING, I WOULDN'T HESITATE TO USE A HEALING SPELL.
BUT I DON'T BELIEVE IN RESOLVING EVERYTHING WITH MAGIC
HUH? W-WHY IS THAT?!

THAT'S WHY I WANT TO RESPECT YOUR NATURAL HEALING POWER.
MAGIC CANNOT EXIST WITHOUT THE POWERS OF NATURE.
MAGIC MUST BE BASED IN NATURE, NOT THE OTHER WAY AROUND.
YOU KNOW THAT MAGIC CAN ONLY BE PERFORMED WITH THE POWER OF THE SPIRITS IN *NATURE*.
IS IT...STILL DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND?
HAVE MORE CONFIDENCE IN YOURSELF, LEWIN
SNAP
FWIP
—OTHERWISE
...WOULD YOU LIKE SOMETHING POWERFUL? IT'LL *REALLY* STING.
KLAK
FWIP
FWIP
Huh?
OH, THAT'S OKAY!
THIS IS FINE. THANK YOU!
G-GOOD-BYE!
ROLLTELY (LAUGHS)
YOU WERE ACCEPTED INTO THIS SCHOOL. YOU MUST HAVE TALENT.
IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE IN YOURSELF, YOU WON'T FIND THE STRENGTH YOU NEED TO CAST A MAGIC SPELL.


TH-THUMP
TH-THUMP
TH-THUMP
TH-THUMP
That was close...!
...THEY MUST BE...
...LEARNING ALL KINDS OF MAGIC ON THE OTHER SIDE...
...OH... THIS WALL...
A HUGE WALL CREATED WITH A MAGIC SPELL... THAT DIVIDES THE SWORDSMANSHIP CLASS AND THE WIZARDRY CLASS.
THERE'S ANOTHER ONE HERE...
I SEE. THAT'S WHY THE PROFESSOR OPENED THE DOOR...
HAVE MORE CONFIDENCE IN YOURSELF.
CLENCH
I KNOW I CHOSE THE SWORDSMANSHIP CLASS...
BUT...

...HEY, YOU.
...I REALLY WANTED TO BE IN THE WIZARDRY CLASS.
WOW! WHAT DIRTY TRICKS DID YOU USE?!
YOU ENROLLED EVEN THOUGH YOU CAN'T USE MAGIC?
WHAM
YOU GO EAT OVER THERE!
AND I HAVE NO ABILITY TO USE MAGIC
...YOU JERK...!
WHAT DO YOU WANT, LOSER!!
WHY DID I CHOOSE THE CLASS I DIDN'T WANT?
HEY, REDHEAD
BAM
BAM
PROFESSOR LEWIN'S FIGHTING AGAIN...!
TAP
DON'T COME HERE. WE'LL LOSE OUR POWER, TOO!!
MAYBE YOUR HEAD IS RUSTED JUST LIKE YOUR SWORD.

...DO I STILL FEEL THIS WAY...?
CLENCH
I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE FRUSTRATING ONLY AT THE BEGINNING
YET...
PLIP PLIP
WHY...
-ON!

—T...
MR. RANDIT...
...RANDIT, WHY NO LIGHTS?
OH...!
SHOKUDAI!!
I-I'M SORRY. IS IT TIME FOR BED?!
YES, BUT...
...I NOTICED THE LIGHT WAS OUT IN THIS HALL.
SHOKUDAI: ONE OF THE FEW FIRE ATTRIBUTE DOLLS CAPABLE OF SUMMONING MAGIC. IT POWERS ALL THE LIGHTS IN SCHOOL.

OH, I'M SORRY! I BLEW THAT OUT MYSELF.
OH, MOON-WATCHING
YOU DID?
WHAT WERE YOU DOING IN THE DARK?
THEY SAY THE MOONLIGHT HAS REMEDIAL POWERS.
AND MY SWORD IS SO RUSTY IT'S PATHETIC.
I THOUGHT MAYBE A LITTLE MOONLIGHT WOULD HELP...
...I GUESS I COULD FIX IT WITH TRANS-FORMATION MAGIC OR REPRO-DUCTION MAGIC ..
BUT...I CAN'T USE ANY MAGIC
Haha.
WELL.
I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT MAGIC IS THE ONLY REMEDY.
OH?
HAVE YOU TRIED OTHER METHODS... HERBS? ARTIFACTS?
BUT I'D SUGGEST RESEARCHING WHAT'S BEST FOR THIS SWORD AT THE LIBRARY.

THE LIBRARY YOU MEAN THE ONE IN THE SOUTHERN TOWER?
DON'T YOU HAVE TO BE A WIZARDRY STUDENT TO ACCESS IT...?
CERTAINLY NOT!
THE LIBRARY IS OPEN TO ALL. ANYONE IN THIS SCHOOL IS ALLOWED TO...
I'LL... CHECK IT OUT TOMORROW!!
THANKS, SHOKUDAI!!
I'M SO STUPID! I NEVER THOUGHT OF TRYING ANOTHER METHOD!
OH! I BETTER GET BACK AND GET TO BED NOW SO I CAN WAKE UP EARLY!
FLICKER
FLICKER
FLICKER
DASH!
DASH!
DASH!

CLATTER
STUNNED
KLAK
WH—
WHAT KIND OF PLACE IS THIS?!
Is that a tree inside the tower?!
SHOCK
IS THIS YOUR FIRST TIME HERE?
HOP
Shisho A book ghost with a spirit inside an object It manages the Library
M-HUM?
OH... YEAH, IT IS!
WHAT SUBJECT ARE YOU INTERESTED IN?
UH...ABOUT MAINTAINING A SWORD AND STUFF...
WE HAVE OVER 2,000 BOOKS.
THAT MANY?!
Haha
I'LL SHOW YOU THE WAY.

...IS IT ALWAYS THIS BUSY?
NO, IT'S ONLY BECAUSE EXAMS START NEXT WEEK FOR THE UPPER-CLASSMEN.
I THOUGHT SWORDS AND MAGIC ARE NOT RELATED.
SO I HAD NO IDEA I'D FIND ALL THESE BOOKS.
OH, NO! THIS COVERS JUST A FRACTION OF THE SUBJECT!
SO THE DESKS ARE ALL FULL. I SUGGEST SITTING AT A TABLE.
OH, IF YOU WANT TO CHECK OUT THE BOOKS, GO TO THE CENTER.
OHH...
...OHH, I CAN GET TO THE CENTER BY THIS ROTATING STAIRWAY...
THUD
AN AFTEREFFECT
WHAM
THROBBB
ALIGH?!
WHO THE HECK DID THIS ..?!
GRR

AH
WHOA?!!
OH.
TAP
TAP
TAP
TAP
UH.
UGH!
ROLL
ROLL
ROLL
ROLL
ROLL
WAHHH!!!
THUD
FLINCH

—SOELA! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!
DASH DASH DASH
C-CHRIS! I'M FINE.
BUT, BUT, I'M AFRAID THIS PERSON ISN'T! O-OH NO!
ARE YOU STILL ALIVE?
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
PANIC
FLINCH
OUCH!
—AH! FORGET IT! DON'T TOUCH ME!
I-I- I'M SO SORRY! I REALLY AM...!
WHAP
DON'T WORRY. IT'LL HEAL RIGHT AWAY!
HM...? WHAT DID I JUST...
..OH! There you are
I PICKED THEM UP FOR YOU.
DON'T TRY TO FIX EVERYTHING WITH MAGIC!
I-I DON'T KNOW HOW TO USE HEALING MAGIC YET...

...WOW, HE'S A HIGH ELF...!!
NO PROBLEM
LONG POINTY EARS.. AND GREEN EYES.. JUST LIKE IN MY OLD BOOK.
THUD
OH! THANKS.
COULD YOU BE... LEWIN RANDIT, FIRST-YEAR SWORDSMANSHIP?
—I'M SORRY IF I'M MISTAKEN, BUT THAT HAIR AND THE SWORD...
GASP
HUH?
HM? YOU MEAN THAT RED-HAIRED BOY?
RATTLE
W-WHAT? WAIT A SECOND!
WOW, I GET TO SPEAK TO SOMEONE FROM SWORDSMANSHIP!
I'M CHRIS COTTENBURG. THIS IS MY TEAMMATE, SOELA EVENPORT!
HOW DO YOU KNOW ME?!
YOU'RE FAMOUS!
FIRMLY.
KINDA OUTSPOKEN FOR A NEW KID
...DESPITE YOUR LOOKS, YOU'RE REALLY HONEST.

...I THOUGHT I KNEW HOW MY CLASSMATES FELT ABOUT ME.
SO THIS IS WHAT THEY REALLY THINK.
I KNOW.
I BET THESE PEOPLE BRAG ABOUT LEARNING LOTS OF MAGIC.
BUT IT WAS NOTHING MORE THAN A RUMOR.
YEAH.
YOU SEE, WE DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT YOUR CLASS, SO THERE'S ALL KINDS OF RUMORS.
WE HEARD YOU PLAY ONIGOKKO WITH SWORDS ALL DAY! THEY'RE ALL ACTUALLY MONSTERS!
BUT WE HEAR ABOUT YOU MOST OF ALL.
THEY SAY, "THE RED-HAIRED LOSER IS A TROUBLEMAKER WHO CAN'T USE MAGIC. HE'S ANGRY AND ALWAYS SWINGING HIS RUSTY SWORD."
AND "NO ONE HAS EVER SEEN HIM SMILE"!
HE REALLY IS BLUNT.

THEY'RE GOING TO MAKE FUN OF ME.
...WELL...
ACTUALLY... THAT RUMOR IS PRETTY MUCH TRUE.
REALLY?
THAT DOESN'T SEEM LIKE YOU AT ALL.
...WHAT?
RIGHT, SOELA?!
...UH... WHAT?!
OH ..YES!
FWIP
I-I-I'M REALLY SORRY FOR HURTING YOU!
FWIP
-A- AND...
AFTER ALL, YOU HELPED SOELA...
IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE YOU'RE THAT KIND OF A PERSON!

THANKS FOR HELPING ME.
THEIR SMILES ARE DIFFERENT FROM THE ONES I'VE SEEN IN MY CLASS.
. . WHY?
THEY'VE HEARD THE RUMORS, RIGHT?
I-I WONDER WHY?! IT ALWAYS STAYS AWAY FROM EVERYBODY!
C-Come back here!
HUH?
STOPPED AGAIN
W-WOTIS?!
WHOA!!
WHAT'S THIS?!
I'M SORRY!
I DON'T BELIEVE IT...!
FLOP
KLAK
THAT'S A BEAST EGG.
SOELA IS FROM A FAMILY OF BEAST TAMERS.
FLAP-FLAP
WHM?
PFF!
MAYBE WOTIS WANTS TO THANK HIM, TOO!

IT'S ..MY FIRST TIME HERE!
N-NO, I DON'T!
WHY DO THEY LOOK AT ME LIKE THAT?
YOU HAVE SO MANY BOOKS.. I GUESS YOU LIKE TO STUDY.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN THE LIBRARY TODAY?
...OH, THEN WE'RE IN THE SAME BOAT.
OH...
!
KCHAK
AH...!
SOELA?!
DOOM
REMINDED OF THE PAIN
...THAT'S HOW I GOT INTO THIS MESS...!
That's when Soela fell off
THE JOLT FROM THE SUDDEN STOP MADE THE DOOR OPEN.
WE WERE RIDING ON A GONDOLA TO PICK UP SOME BOOKS, BUT WE COULDN'T MANIPULATE IT WELL..
YEAH, WE CAME TO LOOK UP SOMETHING TO OPEN A MAGICAL BOOK.
REALLY?

I HEARD WE'D FIND A TOOL FOR THE CLASS IN IT.
BUT NO ONE IN THE CLASS HAS EVER SUCCEEDED. .
WE GET HOMEWORK FOR EVERY LESSON. WE MUST COMPLETE IT CORRECTLY OR THE BOOK WON'T OPEN.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY OPENING A MAGICAL BOOK? IS IT LOCKED?
I THINK IT'S MORE LIKE IT'S BEEN SEALED
NOT EVEN ONCE?!
HEY...! AREN'T YOU USING ALL KINDS OF MAGIC IN THE CLASS?!
NO WAY!
WE HAVEN'T EVEN LEARNED THE BASICS YET.
—I'LL BE DAMNED. I JUST ASSUMED...
...WHEN WE WERE EXPLORING THE SCHOOL...
...MAYBE, WE HAVEN'T HAD CLASS IN THE AEGIS FOREST YET.
MAYBE.
MAYBE AN UPPER-CLASSMAN?
WHAT?! BUT I SAW SOMEONE PRACTICING MAGIC IN THE WOODS OUTSIDE!

...WE SAW A FIRST-YEAR SWORDS MANSHIP PRACTICE FAR AWAY AT THE FOOL HILL.
WE'VE ALWAYS BEEN REAL JEALOUS. .
...THAT YOUR CLASS WAS AHEAD OF US.
THAT'S WHY WE WANTED TO TALK TO YOU.
YOU'RE LUCKY. WHAT ARE YOU LEARNING IN YOUR CLASS?
WE'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW THE REAL TRUTH.
...HMM?

THEY...FELT THE SAME WAY, TOO?
SO THAT'S WHY WE CAME HERE TODAY.
WE'RE DETERMINED TO OPEN THE BOOK!
Right?!
YEAH, WE CAN'T LOSE TO THE SWORDSMANSHIP CLASS OR THE BOOK ANYMORE!
WHAT'S YOUR HOMEWORK TODAY?
LEMME SEE
WHAT'S THAT?
?
IT'S INVISIBLE WALLS
WE MUST EXPLAIN THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THEIR EXISTENCE AND LIST TEN LOCATIONS.
WE DON'T KNOW. WE'VE NEVER SEEN IT, EITHER.
ONE DEFINITION SAYS...
...THAT THESE WALLS WERE CREATED BY AN ANCIENT GOD TO BLOCK INTERFERENCE BETWEEN SUMMONED MAGIC AND SPIRITS.
BUT WE HAVE NO CLUE WHAT THEY LOOK LIKE

HMM?
THERE'S A MAGICAL DIAGRAM DRAWN ON THE ENTIRE WALL
BUT WE CAN'T SEE ANY. WE ONLY KNOW WHERE THE THREE ARE
HOW CAN THEY BE DISTINGUISHED?
THE PROFESSOR SAYS WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO SEE THE SYMBOLS, SINCE THEY WERE CREATED BY ANCIENT MAGIC.
WHERE ARE THEY?
THE FIRST ONE IS TO THE LEFT OF THE MAIN ENTRANCE!
WHERE THE PAINTING'S HANGING CROOKED.
THE SECOND IS IN THE GREAT HALL WHERE WE EAT!
OH NO! IT'S THE WRONG PLACE
The professor popped in on us
THE THIRD ONE IS AT THE HALLWAY TO OUR DORM THE RIGHT WING IS VISIBLE, BUT IT'S BLOCKED!
—IN FRONT OF THE INFIRMARY.

UNDER THE LIGHTS ON THE SECOND, FOURTH, AND FIFTH FLOORS OF THE CENTRAL STAIRWAY
THE FAR WALL AT THE MIMIR'S SPRING IN THE WESTERN FOREST.
THE WALL WITH THREE WINDOWS AT THE FOUNTAIN IN WATER SQUARE.
THE FIRST WALL YOU HIT AT THE STAIRS TO THE HEADMASTER'S ROOM.
THAT'S TEN NOW! ...HOW'S THIS?!
...
PHHH

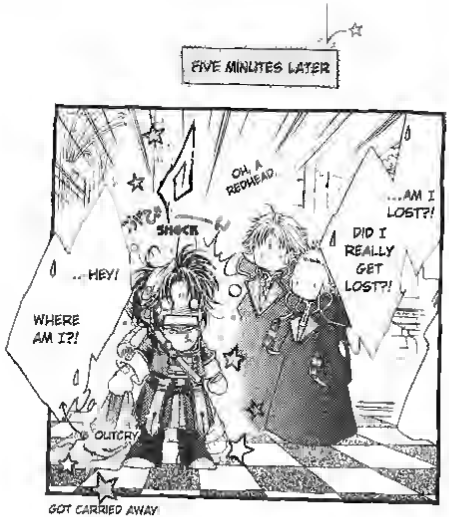
?!
POMA
SPLASH

WHOA! OH MY GOD!
...A HUGE SCROLL .. AND BLUE INK?
WHAT'S THIS? A SCHOOL MAP? SHOULD I MAP OUT THE WALLS?
FLAP
HEY, WHAT DOES THIS..
Y-YOU'RE AMAZING, LEWIN!!
HEY! HOW DID YOU KNOW?!
OH
COPYCATTING
KYAA!!
IT OPENED!!
!!

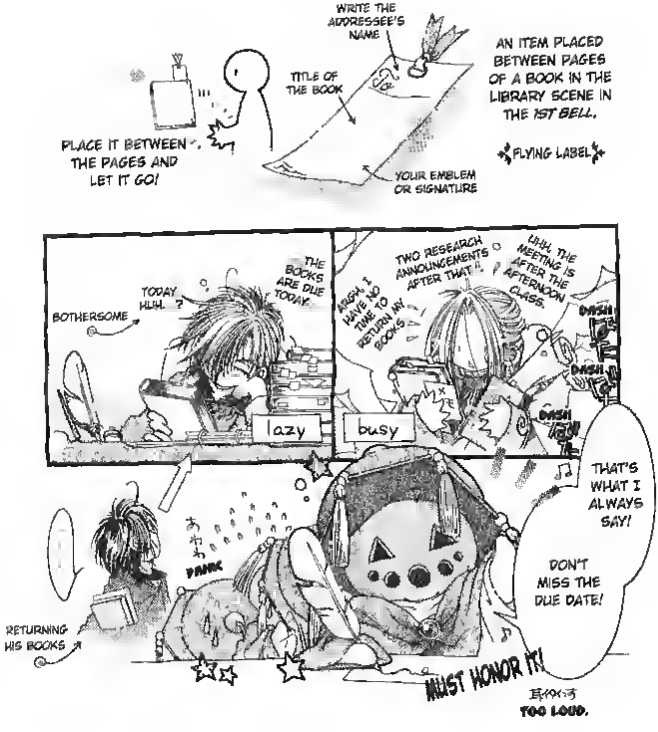
OH, I'VE...BEEN CURIOUS ABOUT YOUR CLASS...
...SO I TRIED TO SNEAK IN A FEW TIMES.
BUT I'D ALWAYS GET BLOCKED BY THE BLURRY WALL...
HMM. THIS IS NO GOOD, EITHER.
I JUST REMEMBERED THEM AS I SEARCH FOR OTHER PATHS
YOU CAN SEE THE WALLS?!
UNBELIEVABLE!!
WHAT...?! NOT EVERYONE CAN SEE THEM?
UH-UH
That's why we had a hard time.
MAYBE YOU HAVE SPECIAL POWERS!
AH!
--SHOOT! I HAVE TO GET TO MY NEXT CLASS!
DONG DONG
OH, LEWIN! CAN YOU COME BACK TOMORROW?
WE'LL BE HERE, SO YOU SHOULD COME!
CLUNK

OKAY!
HEY, HEY...
I THOUGHT... THEY WERE LEARNING LOTS OF MAGIC IN CLASS...
...AND I'D NEVER BE ABLE TO CATCH UP TO THEM.
—I'VE ALWAYS BEEN FRUSTRATED
BUT I WAS ACTUALLY WRONG.
TAP
AU!

...BUT I WONDER WHY
I BET DARWELL AND THE OTHERS WILL MAKE FUN OF ME IF THEY HEAR THIS.
MY HEART POUNDED WHEN SHE SAID THAT.
MAYBE YOU HAVE SPECIAL POWERS.
IT EASED MY MIND...



GOT CARRIED AWAY


WRITE THE ADDRESSEE'S NAME
TITLE OF THE BOOK
YOUR EMBLEM OR SIGNATURE
PLACE IT BETWEEN THE PAGES AND LET IT GO!
AN ITEM PLACED BETWEEN PAGES OF A BOOK IN THE LIBRARY SCENE IN THE 1ST BELL.
FLYING LABEL
BOTHERSOME
TODAY HUH..?
THE BOOKS ARE DUE TODAY.
lazy
SIGH. I HAVE NO TIME TO RETURN MY BOOKS.
TWO RESEARCH ANNOUNCEMENTS AFTER THAT!!
UHH, THE MEETING IS AFTER THE AFTERNOON CLASS.
busy
DASH!
DASH!
DASH!
RETURNING HIS BOOKS
あわわ
PANIC
THAT'S WHAT I ALWAYS SAY!
DON'T MISS THE DUE DATE!
MUST HONOR IT!
耳がいたい
TOO LOUD.

2nd Bell: Light and Darkness

TWEET TWEET TWEET
CHIRP CHIRP
OH..
BELLE-ERATO (NICKNAME BELLIE) A MOP ROBOT THAT CLEANS THE FIRST YEAR STUDENTS ROOMS
MY GOODNESS!!
I'VE TOLD HIM OVER AND OVER AGAIN TO PUT DIRTY CLOTHES IN THE HAMPER!
QUICKLY
QUICKLY
QUICKLY
-NO! I MUST NOT GIVE UP!
I'LL BE REWARDED IF I KEEP PREACHING AT HIM WITH LOVE..
HCHAIK
...YOU LOOK VERY BUSY, BELLE-ERATO.
..AH!
TAP
BOP BOP
HOW IS IT THAT HE STILL WON'T LISTEN?!!
Empty!!

GOOD MORNING...
.. MADAME CURE NOIR, MADAME MILIEU ROUGE.
...YES...
HE SEEMS TO BE... DOING WELL.
YES.
MASTER LEWIN RANDIT IS.
-ANG
CLANG
HM?
DID SOMETHING GOOD HAPPEN?
OH, BUT
I CAN SENSE JOY...
...IN THE AIR AND IN HIS CLOTHES.
HE HASN'T CHANGED SINCE HE ENROLLED!
YES, HE IS!
IS HE STILL DOING AS HE PLEASES?
HISS HISS
CHUCKLE CHUCKLE
ROLL ROLL ROLL

CLANG
CLANG
HAH...
HAH...!
GASP
WHAM
UMPH!!
GRIN

GASP
UNSHEATHE
CLUNK
ALL RIGHT!
PROFESSOR YOU USED BOTH HANDS, DIDN'T YOU?!
SO DID I PASS THIS TEST?!
HMM...I BELIEVE SO.
RANDIT, YOU PASSED. MARK IT ON YOUR LOG AND LEAVE IT ON MY DESK.
TAP
HAHA, I DID IT!
—NO WAY!
...HE PASSED IT IN ONE SHOT.
Really?
CLUTTER
DID SOMETHING HAPPEN TO HIM RECENTLY?
HE SEEMS MORE AGGRESSIVE AND AMBITIOUS
HEY, YOU!!
YEAH, I AGREE.
STOP TALKING ABOUT LEWIN!!
CLENCH
...DARN IT. WHAT THE HECK.

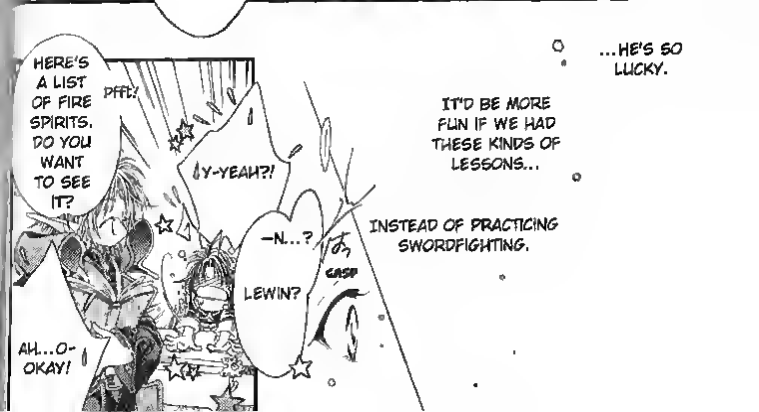
HEY! I SAID STOP TALKING ABOUT HIM!
GRR
NO IDEA.
DO YOU KNOW?
WHAT IS HE DOING... ...RIGHT AFTER THIS?
WOW...
...NOW THAT MY WORRIES ARE GONE, I FEEL LIGHTER
SPLASH
OH! SORRY!!
OH, NO!
—MASTER RANDIT! PLEASE DON'T RUN IN THE HALL!
NEXT TIME...? BUT I JUST GOT THIS FLOOR CLEANED!
HISS
ZIKZIK ZIKZIK
I'M SORRY, SALLIE. I'LL BE CAREFUL NEXT TIME!
WAHH!
—HM?
OH, MASTER RANDIT, YOU'RE EARLY TODAY.
BY THE WAY, DID YOU FIND ANYTHING HELPFUL IN THAT BOOK THE OTHER DAY?
WAS THE SCHOOL THIS MUCH FUN BEFORE?
YEAH, THAT'S WHAT I'M DOING NOW!
DASH DASH DASH

RIGHT NOW?
SOELA SUDDENLY CAME FALLING DOWN FROM UPSTAIRS ..AND CHRIS TALKED TO ME AND SMILED
EVER SINCE I MET THOSE TWO WIZARDRY STUDENTS, WE'VE BEEN MEETING AT THE LIBRARY AFTER CLASS. WE HAVE FUN CHATTING, BUT...
...WE ACTUALLY HAVE ANOTHER GOAL TO ACCOMPLISH...
ONE!
THREE
TWO.
ARE YOU READY?
GULP
PLIP
OHH! SHUT UP!!
I TOLD YOU IT COULD EXPLODE!
HEHEHEHEHE
SEE, I TOLD YOU SO, IDIOT!
DON'T TOUCH ME! WHO THE HECK ARE YOU?!!
GYPP!
KEEP YOUR TRAP SHUT!!
Augh!
RATTLE
RATTLE
WAH!
WAH!
DID IT WORK? CHRIS...
KABOOM
WHOAAA!!

HE'S BEEN TRYING TO HELP ME REPAIR MY RUSTY SWORD BUT...
IT SEEMS...
...IT HAD NO EFFECT ON IT...
I... SEE...
I'M SORRY...
LAN-GLOOMY
...THIS WAS THE LAST ARTIFACT WE COULD TRY.
YOU DON'T NEED TO BE APOLOGETIC.
SMACK
MAYBE IT'S NOT AN ORDINARY SWORD.
LET'S FIND ANOTHER WAY!
...OH.
ARE THERE DIFFERENT KINDS OF SWORDS?
Yeah.
FROM WHAT I'VE FOUND, SOME HAVE DIFFERENT PROPERTIES AS WELL AS MATERIALS.
DOES HE MEAN LIKE DARWELL'S...?
THERE ARE SWORDS CREATED FROM YOUR OWN BLOOD OR STRENGTHENED WITH YOUR KI....
...THEY SEEM TO BE ORIGINALLY TREATED WITH MAGIC.
WHAT?!

THEN I CAN USE ANY MAGIC WITH THAT SWORD?
Well IT CAN'T BE JUST ANY MAGIC I THINK YOU NEED TO SUMMON THE SPIRIT IN THE SWORD
THERE'S ALSO A LIMIT IN SPIRIT MAGIC, TOO.
YOU HAVE TO GIVE IT A SPECIFIC COMMAND.
SPIRIT MAGIC?
IS IT DIFFERENT FROM THE ANCIENT— WHATEVER YOU MENTIONED THE OTHER DAY?
ANCIENT MAGIC IS TRACES OF LONG-AGO BUT STILL POTENT MAGIC FROM THE GODS.
LIKE MAGIC BOOKS AND INVISIBLE WALLS
ANCIENT MAGIC IS WHAT MAKES THIS SCHOOL FLOAT.
IT'S THE MOST POWERFUL FORCE FOR OUR PROTECTION THAT THE ALMIGHTY GOD HAS CREATED FOR US!

IF YOU SWEAR AN OATH TO THE FIRE SPIRIT, YOU CAN USE FIRE MAGIC.
SPIRIT MAGIC BORROWS THAT FORCE FROM THE FOUR ELEMENTAL SPIRITS: EARTH, FIRE, WATER, AND WIND.
AS YOUR POWERS GROW, YOU CAN TAKE AN OATH TO THE HIGH SPIRIT.
THAT'S WHY WE'RE LEARNING ABOUT HUNDREDS OF SPIRITS AND WAYS TO GAIN POWER...
...BESIDES MAGIC AND ARTIFACTS.
...CHRIS IS LIKE A PROFESSOR.

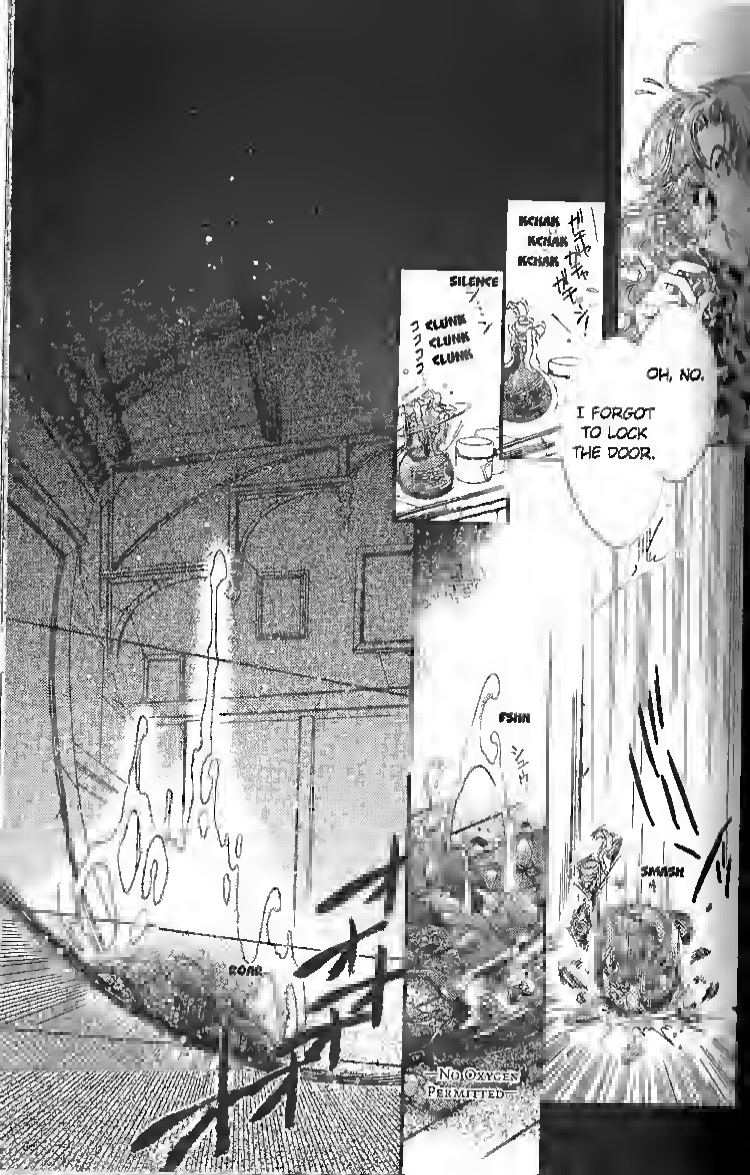

...HE'S SO LUCKY.
IT'D BE MORE FUN IF WE HAD THESE KINDS OF LESSONS...
INSTEAD OF PRACTICING SWORDFIGHTING.
HERE'S A LIST OF FIRE SPIRITS. DO YOU WANT TO SEE IT?
PFFT.
Y-YEAH?!
-N...?
LEWIN?
GASP
AH...O-OKAY!

BUT THE POSITION AND THE ILLUSTRATION TELL ME THIS MUST BE THE SALAMANDER
THESE ARE ALL THEIR NAMES?
I CAN'T READ THEM SINCE THEY'RE IN ANCIENT SCRIPT.
OH..
..LEWIN?
...WELL...
...I WAS THINKING HOW DIFFERENT YOUR CLASS IS...
I'M SO JEALOUS.
.....
...IT'S NO USE THINKING ABOUT THIS...
KNOCK
KNOCK
FIRMLY
SCRAM
SO? DID IT WORK?
NOPE, IT FAILED.
REALLY?
M-HUH
...I KNOW! I HAVE AN IDEA!
CLUTCH
HEY!
I DON'T THINK WE SHOULD BE DOING THIS!

B-BUT LEWIN SHOULDN'T BE HERE...
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT! HE LEFT HIS SWORD AND THE EMBLEM IN THE LIBRARY.
IT'LL BE ALL RIGHT!
YOU'RE SUCH A WORRYWART, SOELA!
WE EVEN COVERED UP HIS HAIR AND DISGUISED HIM WITH MY ROBE!
B-BUT...!
HUMPH!
HEY, SOELA!
WHAT DO YOU THINK? DO I LOOK GOOD?! HM?
.....BY THE WAY, WHERE ARE WE GOING?
COME THIS WAY
TO THE PREPARATION ROOM ANNEX!

I WAS HERE HELPING MY TEACHER OUT THE OTHER DAY.
OH, WOW! WHAT'S THIS?
ARMOR?...
IT'S A PREP ROOM FOR THE LECTURE ROOM DOWN THE HALL.
I THOUGHT WE COULD FIND BOOKS AND ITEMS THAT ARE NOT IN THE LIBRARY!
...WELL, IT'S NOW A STORAGE ROOM TO KEEP UNWANTED ITEMS FOR THE SCHOOL.
WOTIS, CAN YOU KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE DOOR?
JEEZ.
I'M TELLING YOU!! I DON'T THINK WE SHOULD BE DOING THIS!!
DESPERATE
IGNORE
LET'S GET STARTED!
!
FLAP
FLAP
WHAT'S THIS? A MAGIC ITEM? ITS SEAL IS BROKEN, THOUGH.

DASH
HEY!!
SOMEONE'S COMING!
FLINCH
HNN?
CLUNK
CLUNK
CLUNK
CLUNK
THE LABEL IS TOO DIRTY TO READ..
BUT SOUNDS LIKE THERE'S SOMETHING INSIDE...
L-LET'S GO, LEWIN!
I DON'T KNOW! WOTIS CAME BACK IN A HURRY!
WHAT?! BUT NO ONE'S USING THE LECTURE ROOM AT THIS HOUR!
I'M COMING!!
CLUNK
DASH
DASH
DASH
DASH
FLAP
FLAP
FLAP


SILENCE
CLUNK CLUNK CLUNK
KCHAK KCHAK KCHAK
OH, NO.
I FORGOT TO LOCK THE DOOR.
FSHH
SMASH
ROAR
No Oxygen Permitted

MUNCH MUNCH
GLUP GLUP
MUNCH MUNCH
YAH
YAH
WHAP
SOMEONE, BRING WATER! ANYTHING TO DRINK!
OH! HE'S CHOKING!
WHACK WHACK
AUGH!
Hey,
DID YOU KNOW THAT, MASTER DARWELL?
OH
YOU MEAN ABOUT THE LOSER WHO'S BEING A SHOWOFF?
BUT I WANT TO GET TO BED EARLY. I WANT TO BE THE FIRST TO PRACTICE IN THE MORNING!
YEAH, I KNOW
You're dribbling food all over...
...YOU SHOULD SLOW DOWN WHEN YOU EAT, RANDIT...
Gasp!
T-THANKS FOR YOUR HELP!
GLUP GLUP GLUP
NERVOUS

HAHAHA
HE COULD NEVER USE MAGIC NO MATTER HOW HARD HE TRIES
It can't get rustier than that.
HIS SWORD IS STILL RUSTY.
I WONDER HOW HE WAS ABLE TO AFFORD THAT SWORD.
MAYBE HIS FAMILY STOLE IT FROM SOMEONE?
HOP
HAHAHA
THUD
SHUT YOUR MOUTH.
CHAK!
HE'S WAS JUST HERE
HUH? HEY?
PANIC
...ACK?!
YOU CAN SAY ALL YOU WANT ABOUT ME...
...BUT NOT MY FAMILY!
CLENCH
FUMA

STOP RIGHT THERE, RANDIT.
FLINCH
!!
PAUSE
DRAWING A SWORD AT THE TABLE IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD ISN'T PERMITTED.
COME!
HUH?
DARN IT...! LET GO OF ME!!
HEH!
THAT'LL TEACH HIM!
MUTTER
WRIGGLE WRIGGLE
TREMBLE
...OH, TURKFAN.
I'LL SPEAK TO YOU LATER... SO BE PREPARED.
!
BAM

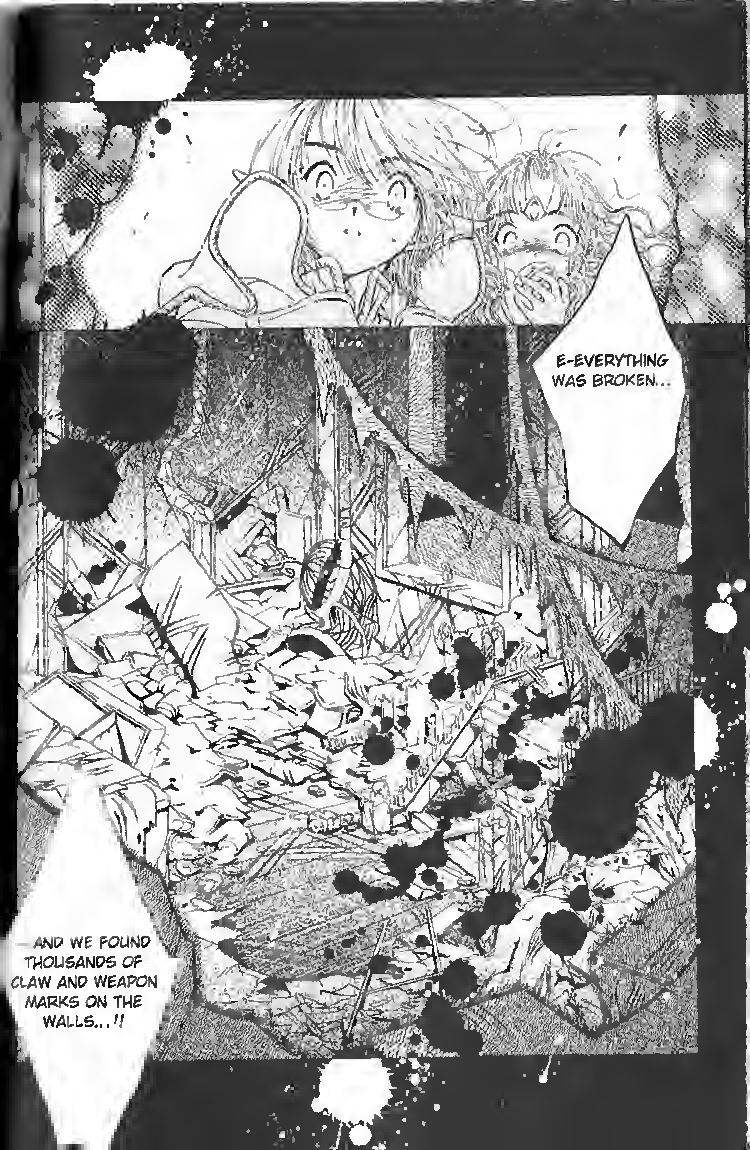
HE INSULTED MY FAM—MY GRANDMA!!
...WHY DO YOU ALWAYS TAKE DARWELL'S SIDE AND TREAT ME LIKE A BABY?!
...JUST CALM DOWN.
SWIP
HE STARTED IT SO WHY SHOULD I...
?!
YOUR STRENGTH IN BATTLE DEPENDS ON THE CALMNESS OF YOUR MIND— THAT'S WHAT I'VE TAUGHT YOU.
GROW UP. DON'T GET UPSET OVER THIS EVERY TIME.
OTHERWISE, DON'T EXPECT TO BECOME AN ACCOMPLISHED WIZARD SWORDSMAN
POOF

OH ..AN APPLE..? HOW DID YOU GET THIS?
I GRABBED IT ON OUR WAY OUT.
YOU DIDN'T FINISH YOUR DINNER, RIGHT?
.....
YOU WON'T FOOL ME WITH THIS!
...JUST EAT IT AND GO BACK TO YOUR ROOM.
...TSK!
MUNCH
SLURP
WHAT...?! YOU CHECKED MY BACK-GROUND?!
A LITTLE.
.....
WHY MUST YOU LOSE YOUR TEMPER OVER A GRANDMOTHER WHO'S NOT RELATED TO YOU?
CLENCH
IS IT BECAUSE... SHE RAISED YOU?

NO...I FORGOT MY LIGHTER.
YOU CAN USE FIRE MAGIC.
WIZARDS DON'T CASUALLY USE MAGIC.
...HUMP NEVER MIND
...TSK!
.....? YOU'RE NOT GOING TO SMOKE?
IT TAKES ONLY A SECOND.
SNAP
FLICK
!
SNAP
...WHA...?
CLUNK
...SO, RIV, I HEARD YOU'RE SMITTEN WITH THAT RED-HAIRED BOY.
DASH
DASH
DASH

...SMITTEN...? WHAT IN THE WORLD?
I HEARD YOU GAVE HIM PERSONAL INSTRUCTION EARLIER.
Stop kidding me!
EVEN THE OTHER PROFESSORS SAID LEWIN'S BEEN MAKING RAPID PROGRESS THESE DAYS.
THAT'S UNUSUAL FOR YOU TO FIXATE ON ONE STUDENT!
IF YOU HAVE TIME TO ENJOY YOUR LITTLE JOKE...
...THEN IMPROVE YOUR CHESS TACTICS, ARSHES.
Rick!
?!
FSH FSH
CHECKMATE!
CLUNK
N-NOOO! T-THERE GO MY PIECES!!
W-WAIT A MINUTE! FORGET THIS!!
PANIC
"YOU CANNOT GO BACK IN TIME TO REDO YOUR PAST FOR ANY REASONS."
.. ISN'T THAT A BASIC RULE OF BATTLE?
No waiting!
...HEY, ARSHES.
DO YOU THINK MAGIC CAN BE USED WITHOUT POWER...?
HUH? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
DASH

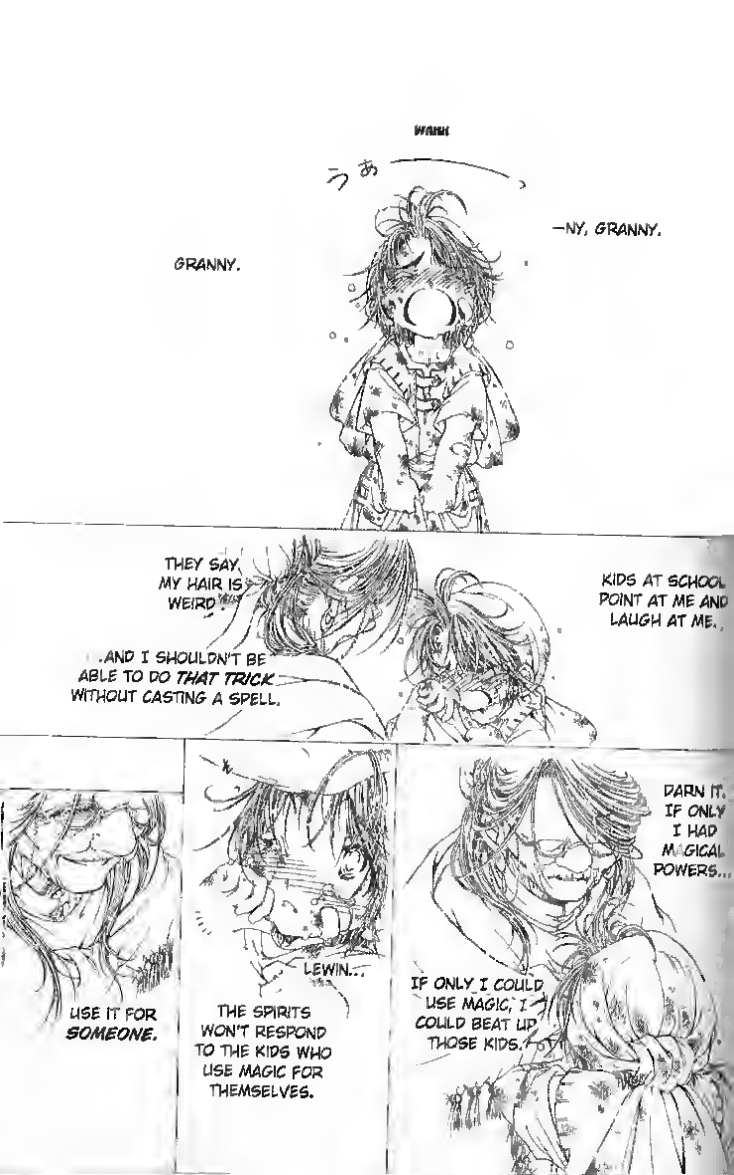
BAM
BAM
BAM
BAM
BAM
—PROFESSOR!
PROFESSOR CHESFORD ARSHES?!
—PROFESSOR! WE GOT A PROBLEM!
YES, I'M HERE. WHAT'S THE MATTER?
T-THE ROOM! IT'S THE ROOM!!
THE PREPARATION ROOM IN THE ANNEX IS A WRECK!!
?!
WHEN WE WENT...
—TO CHECK THE ROOM WAS LOCKED—

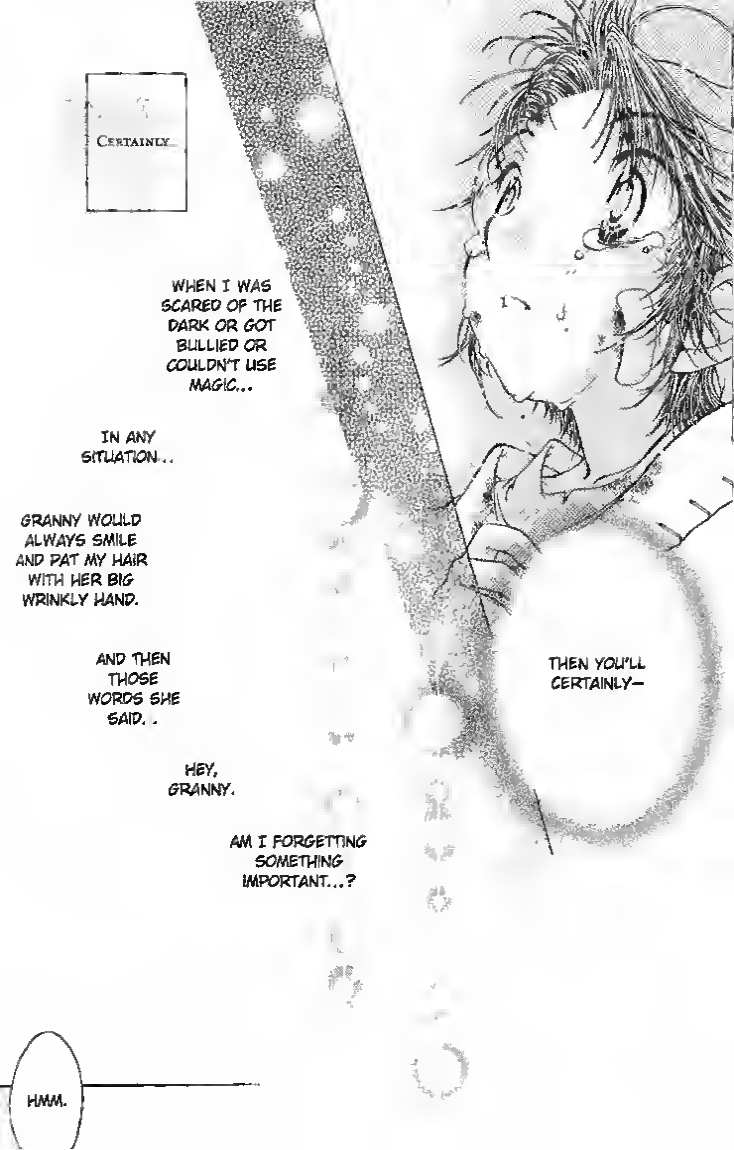

E-EVERYTHING WAS BROKEN...
—AND WE FOUND THOUSANDS OF CLAW AND WEAPON MARKS ON THE WALLS...!!

E-EVERYTHING WAS BROKEN
...AND WE FOUND THOUSANDS OF CLAW AND WEAPON MARKS ON THE WALLS...!!
GOOD NIGHT.
A-ANYWAY, CALM DOWN. TELL ME WHA...
?!
HUH? WHAT THE...?
"A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS"...
H-HEY, RIV?!
IT'S SUPPOSEDLY A PHRASE FROM THE OUTER WORLD— THE SMALL ISLAND OF HUMANS.
...BUT THAT'S EXACTLY RIGHT.
LET'S GO, ARSHES.

3rd Bell: Undead Seeds

Top
Wizardry Class • Southwest side behind the school
OKAY!
IT'S CLEAR. NO ONE'S HERE!
IS THAT.. A SWORD I SEE FROM YOUR COLLAR?
LEWIN?
?!
OKA-Y!
TAP TAP TAP TAP
KEPT IT AS INSTRUCTED WITHOUT REALIZING IT PREVIOUSLY
MY GRANNY GAVE ME THIS SWORD
I HAVE TO KEEP IT WITH ME AT ALL TIMES!
GRANNY?
NO! NO WAY!!
YOU'RE WRONG
YOU CAN'T BRING THAT WITH YOU!
LEAVE IT IN THE LIBRARY OR HIDE IT IN THOSE BUSHES..
WAH! WAH!


WAHH
うあ
—NY, GRANNY.
GRANNY.
THEY SAY, MY HAIR IS WEIRD.
KIDS AT SCHOOL POINT AT ME AND LAUGH AT ME.
AND I SHOULDN'T BE ABLE TO DO *THAT TRICK* WITHOUT CASTING A SPELL.
DARN IT, IF ONLY I HAD MAGICAL POWERS...
IF ONLY I COULD USE MAGIC, I COULD BEAT UP THOSE KIDS.
LEWIN...
THE SPIRITS WON'T RESPOND TO THE KIDS WHO USE MAGIC FOR THEMSELVES.
USE IT FOR *SOMEONE.*


CERTAINLY...
WHEN I WAS SCARED OF THE DARK OR GOT BULLIED OR COULDN'T USE MAGIC...
IN ANY SITUATION..
GRANNY WOULD ALWAYS SMILE AND PAT MY HAIR WITH HER BIG WRINKLY HAND.
AND THEN THOSE WORDS SHE SAID. .
THEN YOU'LL CERTAINLY—
HEY, GRANNY.
AM I FORGETTING SOMETHING IMPORTANT...?
HMM.

SO YOU WERE REAL CLOSE TO YOUR GRANDMOTHER!
Well..
IT'S JUST THAT...
... GRANNY TOOK ME IN WHEN MOM DIDN'T WANT TO RAISE ME.
WE'RE NOT TRUE BLOOD RELATIONS.
BUT SHE RAISED ME AS HER OWN GRANDCHILD... I MEAN HER CHILD.
SHE WAS ABLE TO USE MAGIC EVEN THOUGH SHE'S HUMAN.
It's Bellwood!
SHE TAUGHT ME EVERYTHING.

EVEN WHEN I COULDN'T LEARN TO USE ANY MAGIC, GRANNY DIDN'T GET UPSET AT ALL.
I WANTED TO LEARN TO USE MAGIC LIKE HER.
SHE WAS HAPPY WHEN I LEARNED TO CLIMB A TREE.
YOU KNOW WE NEED THE MAGIC OATH TO USE IT? I TRIED ALL KINDS OF OATHS...
BUT...
BUT I DON'T HAVE THE MAGICAL SEN... SEN...
...SENSI-TIVITY?
IT'S LIKE...
—WIN.
LEWIN.
THAT'S IT. I SEEM TO BE WEAK AT IT AND COULDN'T USE MAGIC. I THOUGHT I FAILED FOR SURE...AND GOT REAL DEPRESSED
BUT...
...I WAS TRYING TO GET INTO THIS SCHOOL TO MAKE HER HAPPY.

YOU GOT A LETTER.
A LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE!
I REALLY DOUBTED THAT I PASSED
I WONDERED WHY I GOT IT.
SO I COULDN'T BELIEVE IT EVEN WHEN I FIRST READ IT.
I SUSPECTED...
...THAT GRANNY MADE UP THE LETTER TO CHEER ME UP.
T-THAT CAN'T BE TRUE...!
Oh.
OF COURSE, IT WAS REAL.
...BUT...
I was just an idiot
I WASN'T THE ONLY ONE...
SCRATCH
..WHO WAS EXTREMELY HAPPY.
GRANNY WAS, TOO.

I DIDN'T REALIZE IT AT THAT TIME...
IS THIS A REAL...?
IT'S REAL?
—N.
MUMBLE
MUMBLE
CREAK
THUMP THUMP
COME ON! CALM DOWN!
?
HUH... OH!
G-G-GRANNY!
I-I HAVE TO ASK HER! I MUST RIGHT NOW!
T-THUD
FLINCH
OH, LEWIN?
...HAPPY THAT I GOT ACCEPTED?
DOES IT MAKE YOU
GRANNY...
...ARE YOU HAPPY?
I COULDN'T BE ANY HAPPIER...
...THAN I AM NOW.
PAT
YES, IT DOES.

HEY, GRANNY!
A-ARE YOU REALLY SURE?!
YOU'RE NOT LYING TO ME, ARE YOU?!
...
PHEW
AREN'T YOU HAPPY?
I'M SO HAPPY I COULD JUMP FOR JOY!
YOU WORKED...
...AND GOT ACCEPTED.
...SO HARD...
I'M SO PROUD OF YOU.

BUT, BUT...
I COULDN'T GET INTO THE WIZARDRY CLASS...
FLIP
FLIP
FLIP
I COULDN'T USE MAGIC SO I'M IN A TOTALLY DIFFERENT CLASS...
OH MY!
I THINK IT'S WONDERFUL THAT YOU GOT INTO THAT SCHOOL.
SO YOU SEE.
MAYBE IT'S NOT EXACTLY WHAT YOU WANTED,
BUT I HOPE YOU'LL LIKE IT ANYWAY.
COME WITH ME.
GRANNY?
I'VE BEEN LOOKING FORWARD TO THIS EVER SINCE WE GOT THAT LETTER.
I CAN'T WAIT TO HAVE YOU USE THIS PRECIOUS SWORD.
THE SWORD WRAPPED IN OLD CLOTH...
...GLEAMED WITH THE FLAME IN THE FIREPLACE.

SURE.
IT'D MAKE YOU HAPPY IF...I USE THIS?
THE ANXIETY THAT WAS DARKENING MY MIND..
I CAN USE THIS?
CLENCH
CLENCH
WAS DISPELLED IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE.
ENOUGH THAT YOU COULD JUMP FOR JOY?
YES.
YES, IT WOULD.
I'LL... JOIN THE SWORDS-MANSHIP CLASS!
IT'S A DONE DEAL!
CLENCH
GRANNY!
-SHE REPEATEDLY APOLOGIZED FOR NOT GIVING ME A NEW SWORD.
BUT I DECIDED I'D BECOME A SWORDSMAN WORTHY OF IT.
THAT'S WHY I CHOSE THE SWORDS-MANSHIP CLASS!

Nevertheless...
I WANTED TO GET INTO YOUR CLASS...
...SO I KEPT TRYING TO SNEAK IN...
TEHE
IF GRANNY EVER FOUND OUT...
...I KNOW SHE'D GET MA—HEY!
FLINCH
GASP
PANICKING
DON'T WORRY ABOUT HER.
REAL PANIC
I THINK OELA WAS A LITTLE IMPRESSED
...SHE HASN'T RECEIVED PRAISE FROM ANYONE.
IMPRESSED?! WHY?!
OKAY, WE'LL BE RIGHT THERE
DASH DASH
IT'S ALMOST THAT TIME SO YOU TWO BETTER HURRY UP!
I-I'LL GO AHEAD OF YOU!
S-SOELA?!
FWIP

EVEN THE OTHER DAY— SOELA FOUND MY TEAM—THE INVISIBLE WALL PROBLEM WAS SO HARD THAT..
...SOME TEAMS TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THE SEARCH MAGIC TO FINISH THE REPORT.
WHA??
THAT INCLUDES... HER FAMILY.
THIS IS WHY SHE SAYS SHE LACKS SELF-ESTEEM.
I WAS AFRAID THAT SHE'D GIVE IN AND RELY ON MAGIC...
...SINCE SHE'S ALWAYS INSISTED THAT SHE CAN'T DO ANYTHING
LIKE THEM.
—WELL...
I WAS SO HAPPY THAT I CONFESSED MY WORRIES.
...FOR RELYING ON OUR OWN EFFORTS.
THEN THE PROFESSOR PRAISED US IN FRONT OF EVERYONE..

LEWIN SAID..
..NOT TO USE MAGIC FOR EVERYTHING..
SO I FELT LIKE WE SHOULDN'T RELY ON IT!
...SOELA SAID IT!
THAT'S WHAT YOU TOLD HER, HUH?
BLUSH
I THINK SHE'S CHANGED A BIT SINCE THEN.
SHE SAID SHE WANTED TO HELP.
AND SHE LOOKED INTO HOW TO REPAIR YOUR SWORD WITH ME
SHE ALWAYS WONDERED...
...WHY YOU CHOSE THE SWORDSMANSHIP CLASS...
...EVEN WITH THE ABILITY TO SEE THE WALLS
THAT'S WHY I THINK SHE WAS IMPRESSED AFTER HEARING ABOUT YOUR SWORD
...TH--

I DIDN'T MEAN ANYTHING WHEN I SAID THOSE THINGS!
B-BESIDES—
THAT'S RIDICUL-
WHY BE IMPRESSED?!
UH...
PEEP
YOU'RE REALLY SOMETHING.
WHEN I SEE YOU, I FEEL LIKE I HAVE TO TRY HARDER FOR MYSELF.
GASP
GRANNY.
LET'S GO TO THIS FOREST.
NOTHING! JUST SHOW ME THE WAY AROUND!
HN?
...YOUR EAR LOOKS WEIRD AND YOU'RE OFF THE WALL, TOO.
I WANNA TELL YOU SOMETHING, GRANNY
FRUSH
MUMBLE
... DID YOU REALLY USE THE BARRIER MAGIC, ARSHES?

WHAT A CRUEL THING TO SAY, RIV!
MY BARRIER MAGIC IS ALWAYS PERFECT!
YOU WERE HOLDING THE LAMP NEXT TO ME LAST NIGHT. WEREN'T YOU WATCHING?! COME ON!
.....
SHOCK
...UMPH.
I SET A BARRIER AS A PRECAUTIONARY MEASURE...BUT THERE'S NO SIGN OF HITTING IT WHATSOEVER.
IT SEEMS WE JUST MISSED THEM.
WELL, I DOUBT THEY'VE GONE INTO THE FOREST BECAUSE OF THE ANCIENT MAGIC'S PROTECTIVE SHIELD.

SHOULD WE GO LOOK INSIDE?
I'LL RELEASE THE BARRIER NOW.
"THOU ART A CREATURE OF VILE BLOOD. NO MORE SHALT THOU ENTER THIS SACRED LAND."
...HUH...
JUST LIKE IN THAT SAYING...
...THIS FOREST IS UNDER THE BARRIER MAGIC.

FOREST... YOU MEAN THE ONE SURROUNDING THIS SCHOOL?!
SO ALL OF THIS IS A MAGICAL BARRIER! WOW!
IT BLOCKS MONSTERS AND EVEN PEOPLE WHO DON'T HAVE AN EMBLEM OR A PASS
NO WONDER IT'S CALLED THE AEGIS FOREST!
ON TOP OF THAT...
THAT'S WHERE ALL THE MAGICAL ELEMENTS ARE NURTURED SO IT MAKES IT EASIER TO CAST SPELLS!
WHAT YOU'VE SEEN THERE BEFORE IS PROBABLY A CLASS FOR ACTIVATING MAGIC.
DOES IT MEAN I COULD USE MAGIC IF I PRACTICE IN THE FOREST...?
My class is right by it, too.
EXCITED
HEY, LEWIN.
ABOUT WHAT YOU SAID EARLIER...

...NOPE.
HAVE YOU SEEN...
...YOUR MOTHER SINCE THEN?
...I NEVER THOUGHT I'D MEET SOMEONE WHO'S AFRAID OF ME
...AFRAID OF YOU...?
I COULDN'T UNDERSTAND WHY.
IT SCARED ME, TOO.
OH, IT'S ONLY BRIEFLY BUT I CAN START A FIRE
THAT FREAKED HER OUT AND SHE CALLED ME EVIL!

ALL I DID WAS TELL HER ABOUT IT.
WAIT A MINUTE, LEWIN!
HM?
ISN'T THAT MAGIC? YOU CAN USE IT?
IT'S NOT MAGIC.
I KNEW IT BEFORE TAKING THE OATH...OR LEARNING MAGIC FROM GRANNY.
IT HAPPENS FOR A SPLIT SECOND ..SO IT'S LIKE A TRICK. SEE?
NO, YOU CAN'T!!!
SMACK
TOO ROUGH
FSHHH!
FSHHH!
I'M SORRYYY.
BUT YOU SEE!
YOU CAN'T USE FIRE IN THIS FOREST!
FIRE IS A HORRIBLE THING THAT BRINGS DESTRUCT—
GASP

"A HORRIBLE THING"
HOW COULD I SAY THAT...?
...SORRY
I'VE BEEN SAYING MORE THAN I SHOULD...
FLICK
?!
WHY ARE YOU MAKING THAT FACE?
I'M USED TO IT.
IT DOESN'T BOTHER ME AT ALL!
You're weird!
—AT LEAST...
..EVEN WITHOUT THE OATH, IT'S STILL MAGIC.
H-HEY, LEWIN!
NO ONE CAN CALL HIM A LOSER NOW..
DOES ANYONE IN YOUR CLASS.. KNOW ABOUT THIS?
PAUSE

WHO KNOWS WHAT THEY'D SAY IF THEY FIND OUT I CAN START A FIRE WITHOUT A SIGN OR A SPELL!
I'M ALREADY KNOWN AS A TROUBLE-MAKER..
ABSOLUTELY NOT!! WHY WOULD I TELL ANYONE?!!
PHHP
PHHP
FWN FWN!
PFFT
..WHAT?
CHUCKLE
S-SORRY!
YOU MISUN-DERSTOOD, LEWIN. I WASN'T LAUGHING.
CHUCKLE
CHUCKLE
...I BET NO ONE KNOWS.
...HE'S SO WEIRD.
LEWIN IS..
This way.
WE'RE NOT LOOKING FOR ANY-THING.
I WAS THINKING OF HAVING YOU ATTEND MY CLASS.
OH? IF WE KEEP GOING WE'LL GET TO THE SOUTH OF THE FEEL HILL.
WHERE ARE WE GOING TO LOOK TODAY?
...SUCH A FUN, TALKATIVE PERSON, NOT A TROUBLEMAKER.

THERE'S A SPECIAL LECTURE JUST FOR FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS.
WHAT?!
RIGHT NOW THE UPPER-CLASSMEN ARE AWAY FOR THE EXAMS.
THE CLASSROOM IS HUGE AND THE TEACHER IS NEW, SO I FIGURED IT'D BE SAFE!
NOOO
...HEY...
WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME SOONER?! I DON'T HAVE ANY TOOLS WITH ME!
DON'T WORRY! YOU CAN BORROW MINE!
YOU CAN'T USE YOUR OWN. THEY'LL FIND OUT!
B-BUT WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS?!
THIS IS SOELA'S AND MY WAY OF THANKING YOU!
IT'S THE LEAST WE CAN DO FOR YOU FOR OPENING THE BOOK!

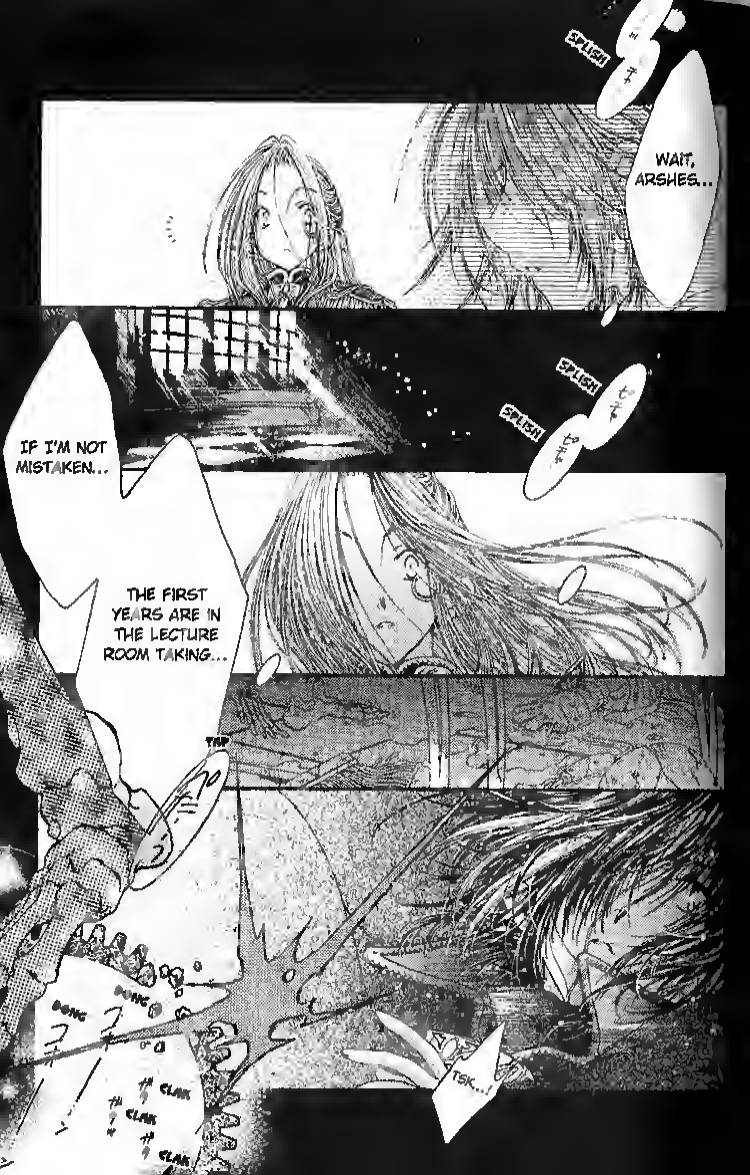
...WAIT A MINUTE. YOU SAY IT'S FROM BOTH, BUT YOU MADE THE DECISION, RIGHT...?
Ha ha ha.
YEAH, IT TOOK FOREVER TO PERSUADE SOELA.
...I BET...HEY, I DON'T WANT TO HEAR HER COMPLAIN LATER.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
NOW, Let's Go!
THAT'S WHAT I MEAN!! HOW COULD YOU BE SO CONFIDENT?!
SHUFFLE SHUFFLE
IT'S NOT A PROB-LEM.
...BOTH OF YOU BETTER HURRY UP...
WE EVEN DISCUSSED WHICH SEAT WOULD BE HARDER FOR THE TEACHER TO FIND.
REMEMBER WHAT SOELA SAID EARLIER.
OH...
SO SHE WON'T GET UPSET WITH YOU NOW.

GRANNY.
OH, THE BELL! HURRY UP!
HEY, GRANNY.
LET'S GET TO THE CLASS, LEWIN!
I MET SOME WEIRD KIDS AT SCHOOL.
BUT...
DOES IT MEAN I'M WEIRD IF I THINK..
...THAT IT'S FUN TO BE WITH THEM, TOO...?
MEAN-TIME
OHH

SCRATCH SCRATCH
...BOYYY.
I HEARD IT'S A WRECK BUT...
...IT'S WORSE THAN I HAD IMAGINED.
.....
PROFESSOR NAGEL IS GOING TO FAINT WHEN HE COMES BACK FROM THE TRIP AND SEES THIS.
RIGHT, RIV?
PREPARATION ROOM SUPERVISOR
UH-OH
ARSHES! BE MORE CAREFUL!
CRUNCH
HOW'S IT GOING? DID YOU FIND—
...OOPS! I STEPPED ON SOMETHING.
MIXED BREED OR GENETICALLY MUTATED... EITHER WAY, IT'S NOT A PUREBRED SPECIES...
A SET OF THREE AND A SET OF FOUR CLAW MARKS...

SORRY... BUT WE MIGHT HAVE... A HINT.
?
LOOK AT THIS. UNDEAD SEEDS.
WHAT...? AREN'T THOSE...
RIGHT.
THEY'RE SEEDS INFUSED WITH PIECES OF ENCHANTED STONE... AND BODY CELLS FROM THE UNDEAD.
ONCE THEY'VE OBTAINED OXYGEN AND WATER, THEY GERMINATE AND BECOME AGGRESSIVE. THEY HAVE A RISK LEVEL FOUR POISON SPECIFICATION--
...HUMPH.
SUCH THINGS LEFT OUT IN THE OPEN.
RISK LEVEL FOUR, HUH...?
THEY CAN'T SELF-GENERATE. SO HOW DID THEY OBTAIN OXYGEN?

I THINK I CAN TRACE THE PROCESS WITH MY RESIDUAL NOTION SPELL.
IT HAPPENED RECENTLY. I SHOULD BE ABLE TO SEE WHO CAME IN CONTACT WITH THEM.
WE CAN EVEN REPAIR THIS ROOM WITH MAGIC.
BUT...
THE ISSUE IS...
HOW MANY OF THESE SEEDS GERMINATED... RIGHT?
CONSIDERING SOME REMAINED INTACT...
...THEY WERE PRETTY OLD, SO I'M GUESSING THERE AREN'T TOO MANY.
WELL! IT'S A RELIEF THAT THERE ARE NO CLASSES TODAY.
THIS WILL BUY US TIME TO RESPOND.
SWIP


SPLISH
WAIT, ARSHES...
SPLISH
SPLISH
IF I'M NOT MISTAKEN...
THE FIRST YEARS ARE IN THE LECTURE ROOM TAKING...
TAP
DONG
DONG
CLANK
CLANK
CLANK
TSK...!

HEY.
OH? WHAT'S WRONG?
AUGH!
LET'S SPLIT THIS SCENE.
IT'S OVER.
Y./Y. TIME FOR LUNCH.
What's being served?
BUMP
BUSTLE BUSTLE
WHAT'S THAT?
ROAR
...HUH...?

WHAT'S THAT...?
...WHA—
I KNOW!
HURRY, ARSHES!
SPLISH
SPLASH
THE WORST-CASE SCENARIO WOULD BE THEY GOT WATER
IF THEY DID BY ANY MEANS, THEY'D INCREASE THEIR AGILITY INSTANTANEOUSLY!
BEING BLIND, THEY'D INSTINCTIVELY FOLLOW THE PREY BY THE CARBON DIOXIDE THEY BREATHE!
ANYONE WITHOUT BATTLE EXPERIENCE WON'T STAND A CHANCE.
ESPECIALLY THE FIRST YEARS...

4th Bell: The Force • The First Battle

ZZZ
LEWIN!
HN?
LEWIN, WAKE UP!
...UH, SORRY.
WHAT? THE TEACHER IS HERE ALREADY?
SHIFF
NO, THE CLASS HAS ALREADY ENDED.

L-LEWIN, DON'T CRY!
DEPRESSED
HEY, LEWIN. YOU DON'T HAVE CLASS, RIGHT?
SNUGGLE
THEN LET'S HAVE LUNCH TOGETHER!
OK!
SLIGHTLY REVIVED
NOD
THAT SETTLES IT!
THEN LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!
LUNCH?
SNIFF
YEAH! OH, BUT YOU CAN'T GO LIKE THAT.
SOELA AND I'LL PACK SOME SANDWICHES.
IT'S NICE OUT, SO LET'S EAT IN THE AEGIS FOREST!
HM?
LEWIN, ISN'T YOUR HILT FACING THE WRONG WAY?
STILL HALF-AWAKE
UGH..
WAHHH!!!
?

KYAAAH!
WHOA...
KYAAAH!
?!
...WHA...?!
KABOOM
WAAAH!
?!!

WHAT? WHAT THE HECK ARE THEY?!
HEY! HEY!
KYAA
あああ
あああ
NUUU
THE HEAD..?
...AH..
PLOP
I'M
THEY'RE M-MONSTERS THAT LACK FLESH AND FORM.
THEY ARE OBSESSED WITH SEIZING LIVING BODIES.
N-
NOOO
ARGHHH!!
B-BUT...
WHY ARE THEY HERE...?
I READ ONCE THAT... THESE CORPSES ARE DOOMED TO WANDER FOREVER... SEEKING PLEASURE IN BLOOD AND DESTRUCTION
CLENCH
DROP

GRAB
WHOOSH
UGH..!
DUUUCK!!
WHAM
GASP
?!
TMP
H-HURRY!
GET AWAY FROM THERE NOW!
CLUNK! CLUNK!
AHH..!
THUD

BADUMP
BADUMP
BADUMP
BADUMP
あああああああ
REMEMBER! COME ON!! I MUST REMEMBER!!!
WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO NOW...?!
N—
NO, LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!
TH-THOSE ARE MONSTERS!
THIS ISN'T LIKE PRACTICE. IT'S TOO RISKY!!
IT'S TOO RISKY TO STAY HERE!
TAKE EVERYONE OUTSIDE WITH SOELA AND GET THE PROFESSOR!
I'LL DISTRACT THEM IN THE MEANTIME!
CHRIS!!
GASP
THAT UNDEAD.. IT'S MOVING EVEN AFTER I SMASHED ITS HEAD...?
IS THIS A REANIMATED SKELETON..? WE'RE IN DANGER..
L-LEWIN, SUE...

I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO'S ARMED NOW!
AND YOU KNOW WHERE THE PROFESSOR IS AROUND HERE!!
FLINCH
YOU CAN STOP THEM WITH MAGIC?!
GET OUT THROUGH THE WINDOW!
HURRY!!
!!
...EVERY-ONE!
CLENCH
IN THIS SITUATION, WE SHOULD "STAY CALM... AND
WAHH
H-HUH? W-WHAT ABOUT YOU?
..I CAN'T STOP THE UNDEAD.
SOELA! GO WITH THEM AND GET THE PROFES-SOR!
!!
...DO WHAT YOU KNOW YOU CAN DO NOW"!
HEH!
GRIN

BUT I CAN HELP LEWIN AND ESCAPE WITH HIM.
I KNOW...
...THAT'S WHAT I CAN DO NOW.
?!
WHOOSH!
LEWIN! DON'T TOUCH THE
UNDEAD CLAWS ARE COATED IN SEPTIC POISON!!

...DIDN'T YOU...
WHOOSH!!
...TELL ME THAT SOONER!!!

Tsk!
IT SEEMS WE'RE IN E WORST ITUATION.
...WHA—?!
?!
...THAT'S...
...MY CUE!
RUN STRAIGHT AHEAD!
HURRY TO PROFESSOR ARSHES!

SWOOSH
T-THD
BOOOM
NOT TURNING INTO ASHES SO THEY'RE ANIMATED SKELETON SEEDS!
ROARR

EVERYONE, COME HERE!
PROFESSOR!
PROFESSOR BEFORE!!
YOU'RE RUNNING?! Riv?!
...OH... HEY. YOU'RE NOT STOPPING, RIV?!
WHY MAKE THEM LOOK MORE GROTESQUE?!!
INNER VOICE
PROFESSOR! WE SAW SKELETONS!
OHH. YOU'RE ALL SAFE NOW!
あわわわ
HEH
TH-THE MONSTERS!
THEY BURST INTO OUR CLASSROOM!
PROFES-SOR, PROFES-SOR!
TH-THEY'RE HERE!!
UH-OH
FWIP
WHEEZE WHEEZE
KYAA
ACTIVATE!

CLUNK
BUZZ
KYAAAA!!
FWIP
FLINCH
THIS CIRCLE IS A MAGICAL BARRIER DIAGRAM I CREATED.
WE'RE TRAPPED INSIDE FOR A WHILE...
...BUT NO MONSTER CAN PENETRATE IT.
SO WE'RE SAFE. RELAX.
...UH..

うわぁぁぁぁん
WAHHH
GASP
WE'LL BE FINE IN HERE FOR A WHIL—
RIV! WE GOT A PROBLEM!
KA-THUMP
HA-HA YOURSELF!
DON'T CRY
NOW, NOW.
THAT WAS SCARY, HUH.
PANIC
I-I-I'M SO SORRY I FORGOT TO CAST THE BARRIER FROM OUTSIDE AND SEALED MYSELF IN!!
Ahh
SHIVER
Ah!

LEWIN, LET'S RUN TO THE FOREST!
THE UNDEAD WILL RETURN TO LIFE AGAIN!
WHY?!
I WAS TOLD THEY'RE VULNERABLE IN THE HEAD AND CHEST!
WHEEZE
DARN IT WHAT ARE THEY?!
THEY KEEP COMING!
THUD
THIS KEY FORCE IS DISTRIBUTED THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE SKELETON, SO ITS VITAL SPOT COULD BE ANYWHERE.
SINCE THEY CONTINUOUSLY RETURN TO LIFE, IT'S IMPOSSIBLE FOR US TO SPOT THE CORE AND DESTROY IT!
THEY NORMALLY ARE, BUT THESE SEEM TO BE REANIMATED SKELETONS
BECAUSE THEY DON'T HAVE FLESH, THEY'RE ANIMATED BY THE KEY FORCE OF ENCHANTED STONE.
WHOOSH
SWISH
SWIPE
...CHILDREN OF THE EARTH, THOU MUST SERVE ME.

WHAT THE HECK??!!
Those are roots?!
C-CREAK
...YOU SEEM TO BE IN POSSESSION OF CERTAIN FACTS
I SAVED YOU!
IS THAT ALL YOU HAVE TO SAY?
C-CREAK
POP
GRIP
POP
P-POP
UNTO THINE MOST UNHOLY BEING OF THIS SACRED FOREST
THOU MUST TAKE THY VENGEANCE

SWOOSH
WHIP
BUT YOU SHOULD ALSO KNOW THIS IS NO TIME TO TALK
PREY ON THE THE WEAK AND DEFENSELESS FIRST.. THIS IS COMMON SENSE.
THAT MOMENT OF CARELESSNESS COULD LEAD TO DEATH.
WHOOSH
CRACK
...REMEMBER THAT.

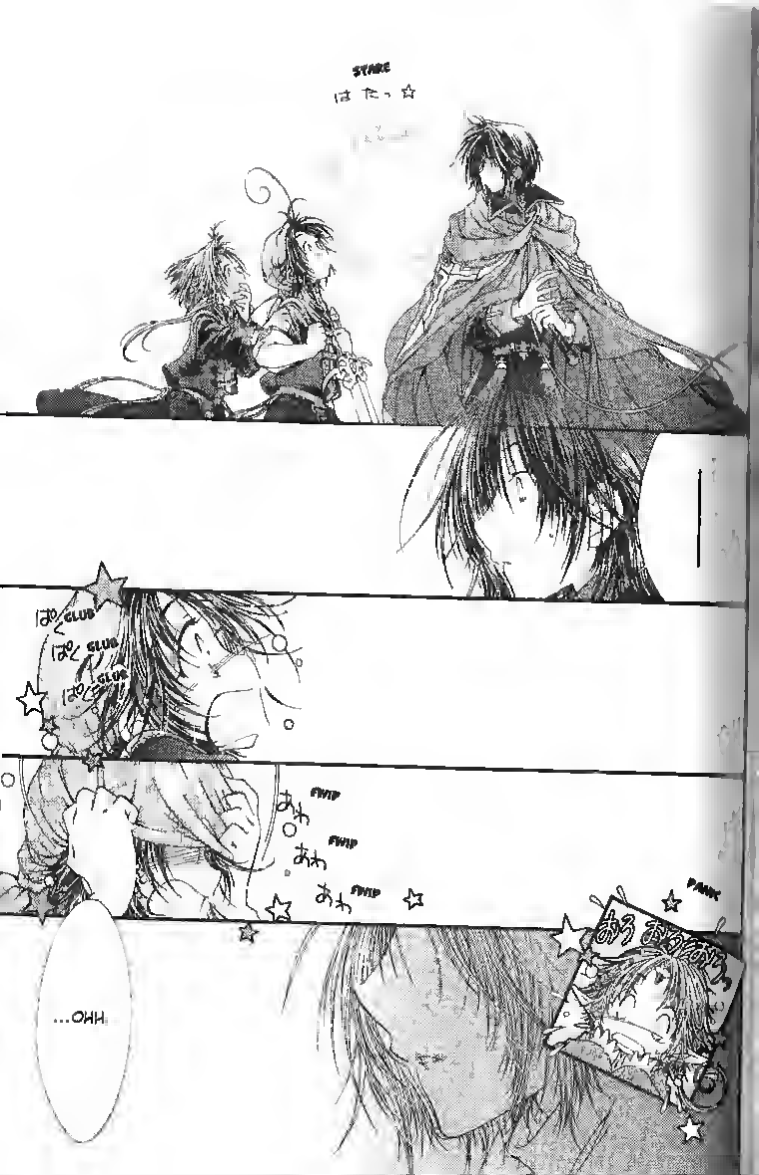
SWOOSH
NO... THAT WAS THE TRANSFORMATION MAGIC.
OH, WOW...
AND DID HE RECITE THE PSALM OF THE EARTH...?
IS A WHIP SUPPOSED TO BE THAT HARD...?!
STUNNED
THE EARTH ELEMENTAL MAGIC THAT'S CONSIDERED MOST DIFFICULT FOR MASTERING AND CONTROLLING...?
BUT THAT MAGIC—
WHO'S THIS PROFESSOR...?

...ANYONE IN SCHOOL PROTECTED BY THE LIGHT SPIRIT SHOULD NEVER BE ABLE TO SUMMON IT...

5th Bell: Aim of the Attack

THAT PROFESSOR IS AMAZING
HUH...?!
HIS WHIP PIERCED THE BONES, RIGHT?!
?
?
PROFESSOR QUALFER IS THE MASTER OF TRANSFORMATION MAGIC!
HE TRANSFORMED THE WHIP TIP INTO PURE CRYSTALLIZED CARBON
CONTROL THE WHIP MOVEMENT FREELY.
COVALENT BOND
CONTROL THE INTERATOMIC BOND
BY CONDENSING CARBON VAPOR INSTANTANEOUSLY...
WHAT? YOU MEAN A DIAMOND?!
YES, ISN'T IT HARD?
HE FORMED THE PURE CRYSTALLINE TO RAISE ITS DESTRUCTIVENESS.
DIAMOND IS THE HARDEST SUBSTANCE IN EXISTENCE!
IT HAS 3,000 TIMES THE HARDNESS OF A KNIFE.

HOW CAN A ROOT WRAP AROUND LIKE THAT?!
HMM
OF COURSE!
OH! THAT ROOT WAS TRANSFORMED, TOO?!
OHH, WOW!
Cool!
L-LET GO OF ME
GRIP
WHAAA
THAT FOOL...
CLUNK
CLUNK
FWIP
...ARE YOU HURT?
...O-
OH MAN! HOW DID YOU DO THAT?!
L-LEWIN?!
JUST WHEN I THOUGHT I SAW A ROOT COME UP..
UH-OH..!
LEWIN?


STARE
はたっ☆
ばくばくばくばく
FWIP
FWIP
FWIP
PANIC
...OHH

SNATCH
FROZEN
SHUDDER
"SILENCE."
BLANKED OUT
FWIP
WHAT?
P-PROFESSOR! PLEASE WAIT!
Y-YOU MISUNDERSTOOD. THERE'S A REASON..
I WANT TO KNOW WHAT A SWORDSMANSHIP STUDENT IS DOING HERE
YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO EXPLAIN YOURSELF, RANDIT.

WHA—?
I-I CAN'T... SPEAK?!
I'M SPEAKING TO THIS STUDENT.
DON'T INTERRUPT.
...YOU PROBABLY HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH THIS, THOUGH.
PERHAPS...
...YOU TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THIS TIMID ELF TO SNEAK IN HERE.
HOW CRAFTY OF YOU.
NO, LEWIN HAS DONE NO SUCH THING!
BUT...
I CAN'T SPEAK OUT!
NO!
YOU GOT IT WRONG!
YOU'RE WRONG!!

CHRIS ISN'T TIMID AT ALL!
THAT!
TAKE THIS!
AND THAT!
ANY VOICE...!
!
YOU DON'T KNOW ANY-THING..
WRIGGLE WRIGGLE
HOW DARE YOU SAY THAT ABOUT HIM!!
L-LEWIN!
DOM!
WAH!
CHRIS HAS DONE SO MUCH FOR ME!
THAT'S... THAT'S SUCH A CRUEL THING TO SAY...!
CLUTCH
I WON'T ALLOW YOU TO MOCK MY GOOD FRIEND!!

THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
"—ANYTHING!"
"I'M SO STRONG THAT I WON'T CRY NO MATTER WHAT!"
"...WHO I'M DESTINED TO BECOME..."
"I'LL ALWAYS LOVE..."
...YOU...
...YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED SINCE THEN...

PWIP
UNTIL I GIVE YOU FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS—
...FINE.
WE CAN DISCUSS YOUR PUNISHMENT LATER
!
THUMP
CLUTCH
PWIP
SKIFF
WHOOSH
LEWIN?!

SHOVE
SHOVE
SWOOSH
SWOOSH
CLANK
SWITCH
CLANK

SHOOSH
ACK—
...I...
YAHK
...TSK! YOU SAW THEM COMING?
I DIDN'T NOTICE THEM...
OF COURSE
THUD

YOU'RE CHRIS... RIGHT?
LISTEN
GO TO THE FOREST WITH RANDIT AND HIDE IN THE HEAVILY WOODED AREA.
IT DOESN'T HAVE PERFECT DEFENSE LIKE THAT OF A MAGICAL DIAGRAM
BUT THE FOREST SPIRITS WILL PROTECT YOU.
AS A HIGH ELF, YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO HEAR THE CALLING OF THE TREES.
...THIS PROFESSOR...
...CAN YOU DO IT?
...KNOWS... WHO I AM...?

THERE'RE NONE?!
?!
BAM
SHOOSH
THEY JUMPED...?!

POP
SWOOSH
AH...?!
?!
WAH

WHERE DID THEY GO?!
...THEY TOTALLY IGNORED RIV AND THE OTHERS...
IF THEY WERE AFTER US, THEY DIDN'T NEED TO JUMP OVER RIV..
DID THEY CHANGE THE COURSE FOR THE TARGET...?
THEN WHAT DID THEY FIND?
WHAT'S OVER THE HILL...?
MAYBE... THEY DIDN'T NOTICE US?
!?
.....

THREE OF YOU AT THE FEEL HILL!!
GET AWAY FROM THERE, NOW!!
TWITCH
?!
FWIP
CHRIS ISN'T TIMID AT ALL!
TK-
TK-THUMP
-THUMP

...ORE'S
CLASS
ND THE
ATHER'S
NICE...
...OH MAN!
HEY, MASTER DARWELL.
WHY DO WE HAVE TO HELP YOU WITH YOUR TRAINING?
GLOOM
I MUST... PRACTICE MORE THAN HIM.
WHOOSH
...DARN IT! I CAN'T LET THAT LOSER DEFEAT ME!
BOM
Z-Z-Z-ZOOM
TWITCH
BOO
?
STOP BEING ANNOY-ING!!
JUST SHUT UP AND HELP!!
AHH!!
BUMP
SCRATCH SCRATCH
...AH...
AHH...
TSK!
I THOUGHT WE COULD PLAY TODAY.

? WHAT'S THE...
SCUFF
WA—
WAHHHHH!!!
DASH
HUH?
H-HEY! YOU GUYS?!

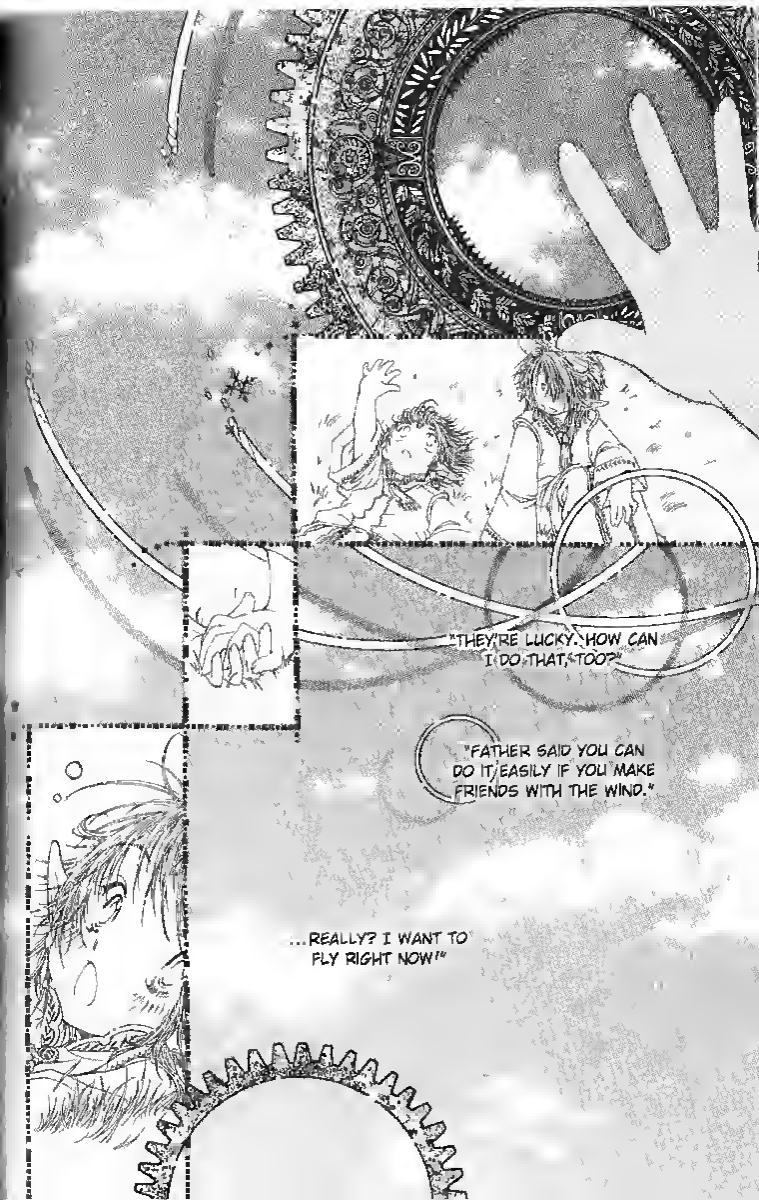
WAHHH!
HEY! WAIT UP!
WHAT THE HECK?! WHERE ARE YOU—
SWIPE

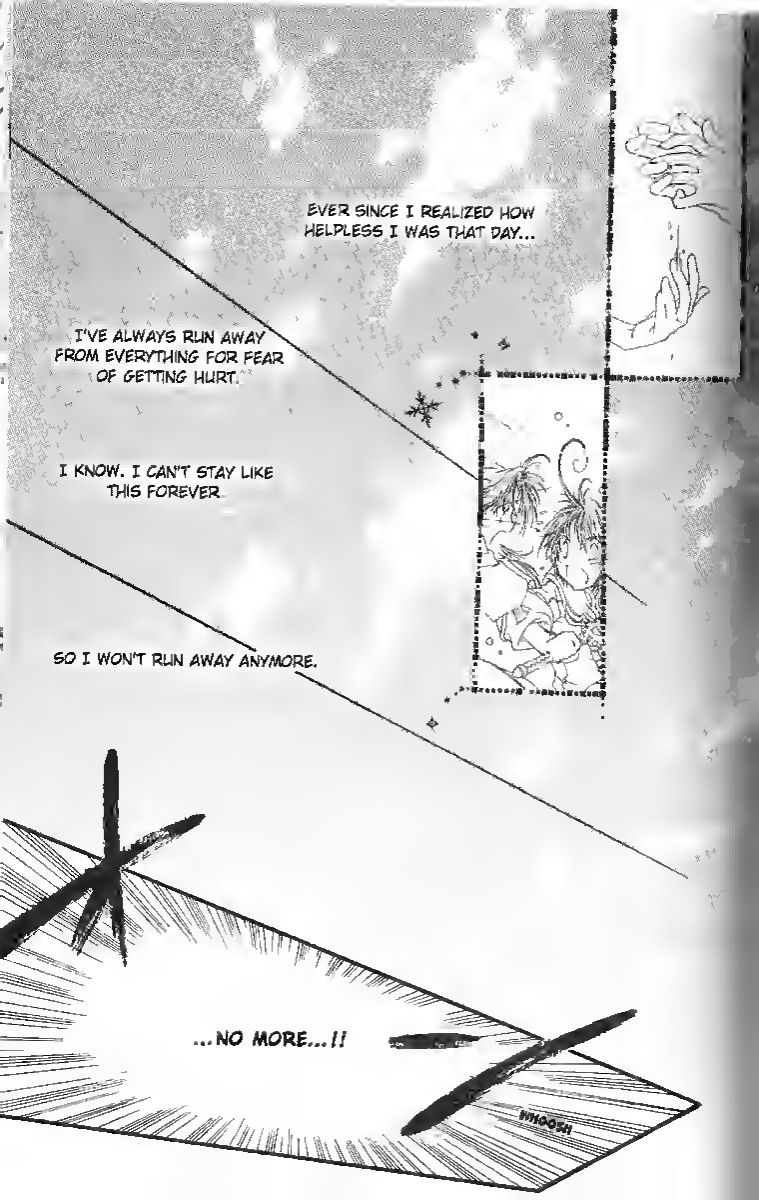
SEEING THE BIRDS FREELY SOAR...

THROUGH THE CLEAR BLUE SKY,

I OFTEN WISHED I COULD FLY LIKE THEM...

WHEN I WAS LITTLE.


"THEY'RE LUCKY. HOW CAN I DO THAT, TOO?"
"FATHER SAID YOU CAN DO IT EASILY IF YOU MAKE FRIENDS WITH THE WIND."
...REALLY? I WANT TO FLY RIGHT NOW!"


EVER SINCE I REALIZED HOW HELPLESS I WAS THAT DAY...
I'VE ALWAYS RUN AWAY FROM EVERYTHING FOR FEAR OF GETTING HURT.
I KNOW. I CAN'T STAY LIKE THIS FOREVER.
SO I WON'T RUN AWAY ANYMORE.
...NO MORE...!!
WHOOSH

ZIO
ZIO
……

6th Bell: Undefeated

WHOA..?!
TSSH!
..OW...
WRIGGLE
..OUCH..!
W-WHAT WAS–
GASP
HUH..?!
DUP DUP
I-I MUST HELP HIM..
BLANK
BUT FIRST, W-WE NEED TO ESCAPE FROM THE MONSTERS
EEP!
PANIC
PANIC
PANIC
DRUMS DRUMS
HEY, YOU! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!

...HUH?
CRUMMLE
HM..?
AUGH?
WHOA!
WAHHH!
UHH

ちょ—ん
DING
HUH?
CH—
...OVER THERE
HUH? HUH?
HEY, CHRIS?!
WHERE ARE YOU?
お！い？
POOF
ポン
AH...!

WHAT... ?! SKELETON?!
WHY?!
REALIZING THAT QUICKLY, THE ELF LEAPED TO THE RESCUE...
...FLYING THROUGH THE WIND WITHOUT CHANTING AT HIS AGE...
...PROBABLY THE ONES THAT JUMPED OVER US.
THEY MUST HAVE DUG BENEATH MY WORM TREE ROOTS OR THE AEGIS FOREST BARRIER TO ATTACK FEEL HILL.
THAT'S INCREDIBLE...!
...HE SEEMED TO HAVE GOTTEN SERIOUSLY INJURED.
...LEWIN! DON'T TOUCH THE CLAWS!!
UNDEAD CLAWS ARE TIPPED WITH DEADLY SEPTIC POISON!!
DASH!
SWIP
SHARP!

WAIT!
WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING?!
AUGH...! LET GO OF ME!
CHRIS DOESN'T HAVE ANY WEAPONS!
SO I MUST—
WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF YOU ASSIST HIM?
YOU SHOULD KNOW IT'S FUTILE TO ATTACK THEM BLINDLY WITH A SWORD.
YOU CAN'T HELP HIM!
...I'M SORRY, PROFESSOR!
CHOMP
?!

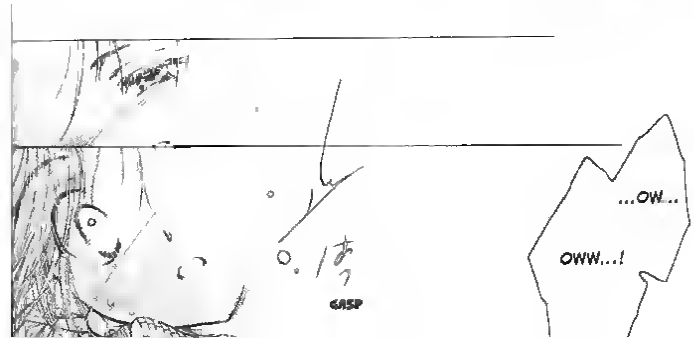
HOP
WAIT, RANDIT!
COME BACK!
RANDIT!

CHRIS...!

WHO IS IT...?

DID SOMEONE CALL ME...?

IS THAT YOU, THIES?



YOU'RE NUTS! YOU SHOULDN'T MOVE TOO FAST!
THROB
IT'S STILL BLEEDING. YOU'LL OPEN UP THE WOUND!
ARGH!!
...AH...
FWIP
HEY, YOU...!
WHOA?!
FLINCH
...WHERE ARE WE...?
WE FELL INTO A LARGE PIT ON FEEL HILL!
I MUST HAVE HURT MY RIGHT LEG THEN.
SO I MANAGED TO DRAG US TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE PIT.
WHAT THE HECK ARE THEY?!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON AT ALL!
MONSTERS POPPED UP AND YOU RUSHED IN...
—WHAT'S ALL THIS...?
TREMBLE

...I DON'T KNOW...
ANXIETY AND FRUSTRATION...
NEGATIVE EMOTIONS INSTANTLY CLOUD THE AURA.
THEY... SUDDENLY ATTACKED US, TOO...
I ONLY KNOW THEY'RE REANIMATED SKELETONS AND THEY SHOULDN'T BE HERE.
SWOOSH
HOW CAN I DEFEAT THEM...?!
W-WAIT A MINUTE!
WHAT ARE THEY DOIN--
I CAN'T SUMMON THE SYLPH FROM HERE...
WE CAN'T JUST DESTROY THEIR HEADS. WE NEED TO GET THE CORE--TO THEIR BODY'S ENERGY SOURCE.

W-WAHHH!
SNEAK
I MUST DESTROY THEIR CORE...
.. OR BURN THEM UP WITH FIRE ..
WAHH!
THIS... BLOOD..!
AND THEY'RE OUT OF THE WOODS..
THUD

SWIP
IT'S NOT A TUTELARY SPIRIT BUT... EVEN I CAN SUMMON IT FROM HERE...!
...MESSENGER OF FIRE, PARTAKE OF MY SACRED BLOOD OFFERINGS.
UNTO THIS DEVOURER OF MY SHADOWS, SUMMON THE WRATH OF ETERNAL FLAME!
CLASP
...OH, FIRE SALAMANDER.
ROAR
FLICK
FLICK
FLICK
FLICK
FLICK

HEAR MY CALL!!

KABOOM!
ROAR
...AUGH... HUH?

.... to be continued.

Qualfer Riverwood
(Black Kylin Keeper)

Birthday: **September 23**
Eye Color: **Amethyst**
Subjects in Charge: **General Swordsmanship, Magical Astronomy**

Professor Qualfer's unexpected popularity makes me real nervous when drawing him. (Laughs) By halting his aging with the Mask Curse, Professor Qualfer appears young, but he's Professor Arshes's age. His name and birthday were actually decided afterward. Along with the Mask Curse, he is filled with many mysteries.

Obesford Arshes
(Scarlet Sorceror)

Birthday: **October 20**
Eye Color: **Sunstone**
Subjects in Charge: **Barrier Magic, Seal Magic**

As I aimed for a different character from Professor Qualfer, Professor Arshes came to me naturally (Laughs) His sweet tooth led to his being a good baker, and he'd always bring baked goods to his students. He's a hard worker who was given the title "the Scarlet Sorceror" at his late older brother's request.

Milieu Rouge Tresor
(Indigo Witch)

Birthday: **November 3**
Eye Color: **Amber**
Subject: **Healing Magic**

Milieu Rouge is a professor who is in the same team with the two listed above. Coming from a family of Ice witches, she studied witchcraft accordingly. But then she switched courses to become a healing witch—out of desperation to save her older sister, who remains under the seal.

Milieu Rouge is one of the few professors who knows Rejuvenation Magic. Her older sister's seal is significantly related to the Mask Curse.

Aventura Character Profiles

Lewin Randit

Birthday: **July 28**
Eye Color: **Garnet**
Protective Element: **Fire**

"If my main character is going to be a boy, I want someone energetic"—that's when Lewin popped into my head. (Laughs) I only drew his silly curly hair out of fun in the beginning—what can you do to make it look like that?

Chris Gottenburg

Birthday: **April 5**
Eye Color: **Peridot**
Protective Element: **Wind**

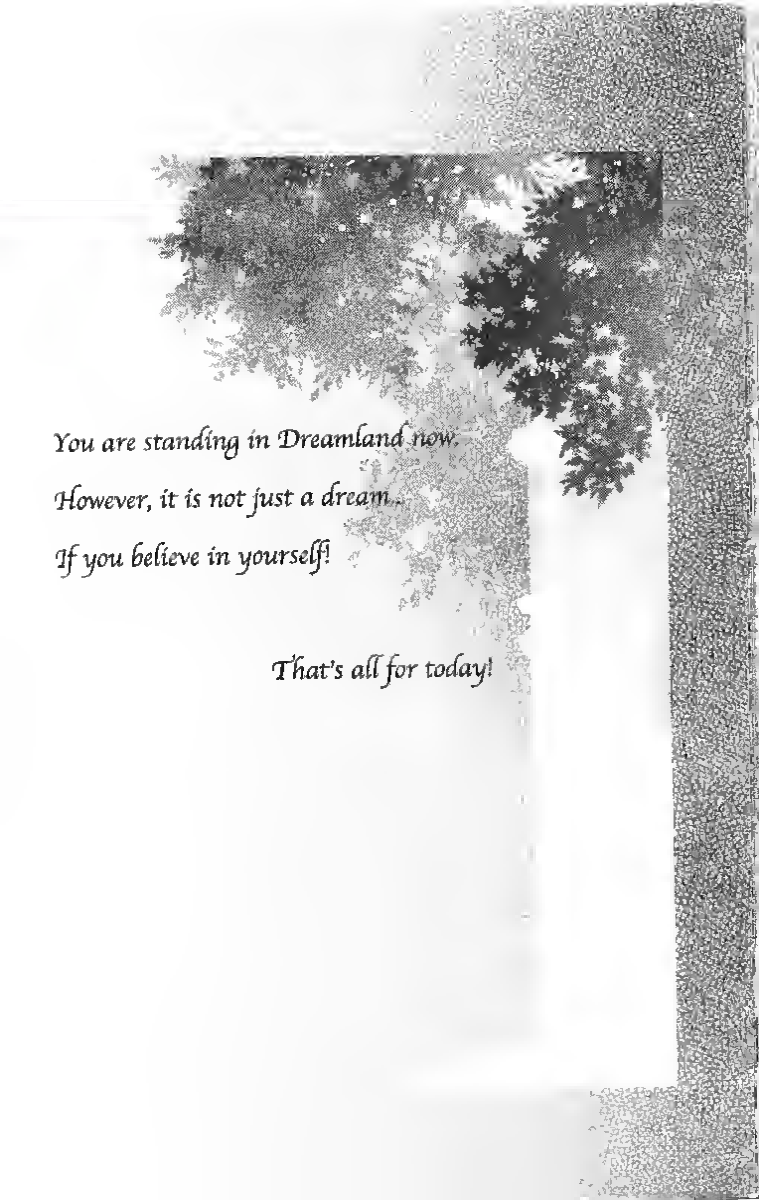
As a result of meeting Lewin, Chris really showed off his positive attitude in the *3rd Bell* (Laughs) Though he claimed he doesn't know magic, he is the heir of an archbishop back home in Nemophily Land. He secretly has a tragic past. I was hoping I could show his growth as he overcomes it.

Socia Evenport

Birthday: **March 20**
Eye Color: **Aquamarine**
Protective Element: **Water**

I've never drawn this kind of character—the wimpy, shy youngest child. I'm putting a conscious effort into giving her a softer expression we don't see in a boy... It's very difficult.

To answer a question I'm asked all the time, Wotis is male. What's inside is a secret. (Laughs)

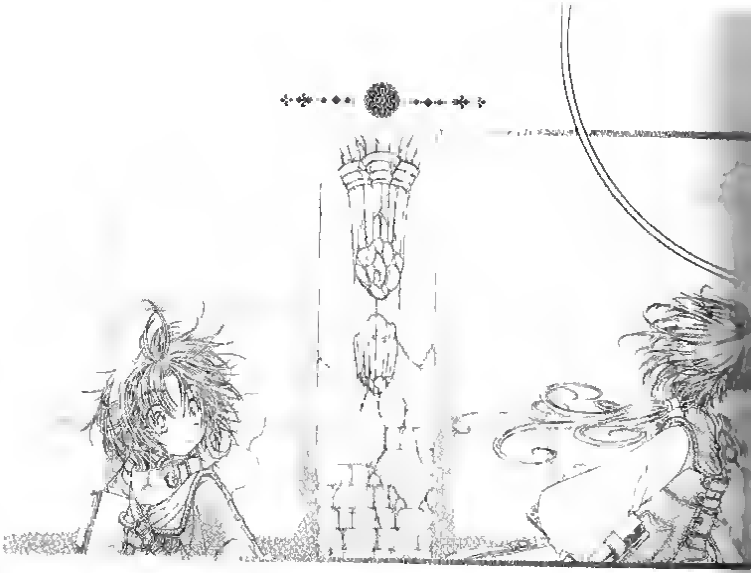


You are standing in Dreamland now.

However, it is not just a dream...

If you believe in yourself!

That's all for today!



I DEDICATE THIS BOOK TO MY MOTHER IN HEAVEN WHO LOVED MY WORK MORE THAN ANYONE

AND I DEDICATE IT TO MY FATHER IN HEAVEN AS WELL.

TO MY OLDER BROTHER, ALL OF MY RELATIVES, FRIENDS, AND READERS, I WAS ABLE TO CREATE THIS BOOK *AVENTURA* ONLY WITH YOUR KINDNESS AND SUPPORT.

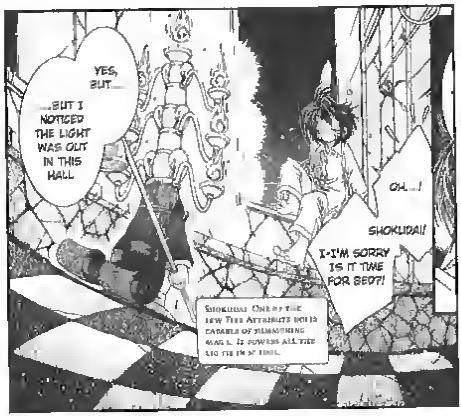
I AM OVERWHELMED WITH GRATITUDE THAT CANNOT BE DESCRIBED IN ANY WORDS. THOUGH I FAIL TO OFFER ANYTHING, I HOPE I CAN SHOW HOW I FEEL THROUGH MY WORK. I HAVE ONLY BEEN CAUSING INCONVENIENCE TO EVERYONE, BUT I WILL DO MY BEST.

I THANK, FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART, THE EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY, MY EDITOR FOR COOPERATING WITH AN ILLUSTRATOR LIKE ME, AND EVERYONE WHO READS THIS BOOK.

2006. April. 翠川しん Shinkawa Midori

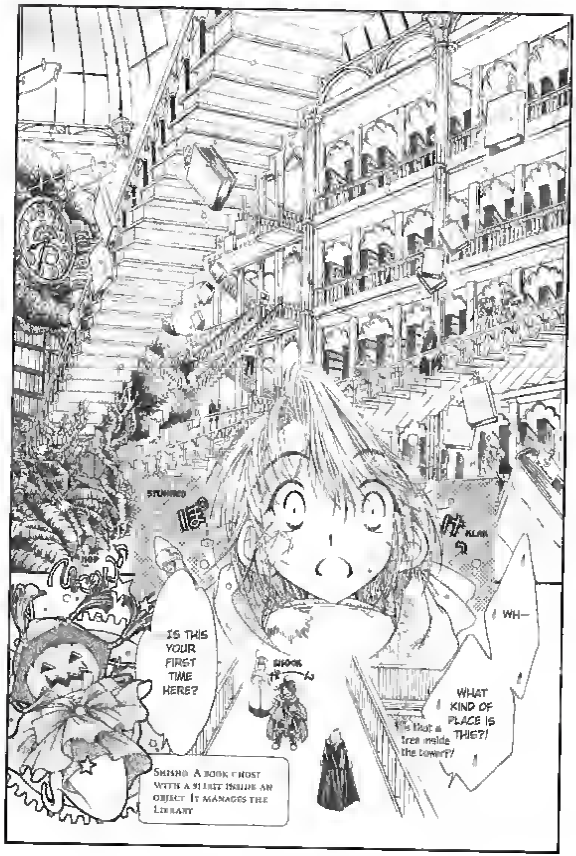
Translation Notes

Japanese is a tricky language for most Westerners, and translation is often more an art than a science. For your edification and reading pleasure, here are notes on some of the places where we could have gone in a different direction, or where a Japanese cultural reference is used.



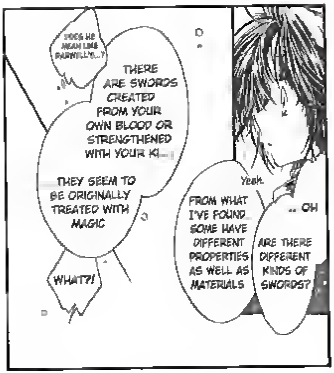
Shokudai, page 25

Shokudai means "candleholder" in Japanese.


STUNNED
ALARM
HOP
WH—
WHAT KIND OF PLACE IS THIS?!
Is that a tree inside the tower?!
BOOK
IS THIS YOUR FIRST TIME HERE?
Shisho: A book ghost with a 91 hit inside an object. It manages the Library.

Shisho, page 28

Shisho means "librarian" in Japanese.


DOES HE MEAN LIKE PARTICLE...?
THERE ARE SWORDS CREATED FROM YOUR OWN BLOOD OR STRENGTHENED WITH YOUR KI...
THEY SEEM TO BE ORIGINALLY TREATED WITH MAGIC
WHAT?!
Yeah.
FROM WHAT I'VE FOUND, SOME HAVE DIFFERENT PROPERTIES AS WELL AS MATERIALS
.. OH
ARE THERE DIFFERENT KINDS OF SWORDS?

Ki, page 58

The Japanese word *ki*, literally translated, means "spirit." However, it is best described as "psychic energy," here used to enhance the strength of the magical sword, as Chris explains to Lewin.

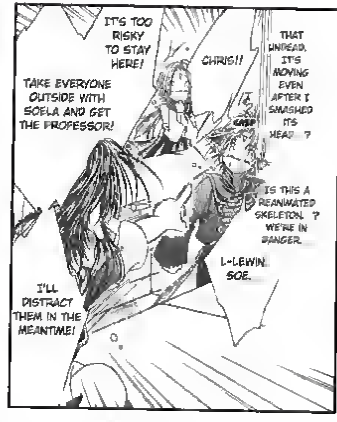
YOU SEE, WE DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT YOUR CLASS, SO THERE'S ALL KINDS OF RUMORS.
WE HEARD YOU PLAY ONIGOKKO WITH SWORDS ALL DAY! THEY'RE ALL ACTUALLY MONSTERS!
BUT WE HEAR ABOUT YOU MOST OF ALL..
THEY SAY, "THE RED-HAIRED LOSER IS A TROUBLEMAKER WHO CAN'T USE MAGIC. HE'S ANGRY AND ALWAYS SWINGING HIS RUSTY SWORD."
AND "NO ONE HAS EVEER SEEN HIM SMILE"!
REALLY?! UMM...

Onigokko, page 34

This is the Japanese version of the playground game tag. The person who is "it" is called the *oni* or ogre.

Poof, page 158

The word actually used is *kotsuzen*, which means "suddenly" or "all at once." Since the bubble indicates the empty space where Chris was, we thought that *poof* best communicated the sense of a sudden disappearance.


IT'S TOO RISKY TO STAY HERE!
TAKE EVERYONE OUTSIDE WITH SOELA AND GET THE PROFESSOR!
I'LL DISTRACT THEM IN THE MEANTIME!
CHRIS!!
THAT UNDEAD. IT'S MOVING EVEN AFTER I SMASHED ITS HEAD...?
GASP
IS THIS A REANIMATED SKELETON...? WE'RE IN DANGER.
L-LEWIN SOE.

Reanimated skeleton, page 116

The word actually used in the original was "marionette." However, we felt "reanimated skeletons" better conveys the sense of "controlled undead."

Kylin, page 171

A *kylin* is a Chinese mythical creature that combines the features of a dragon, lion, deer, and ox.

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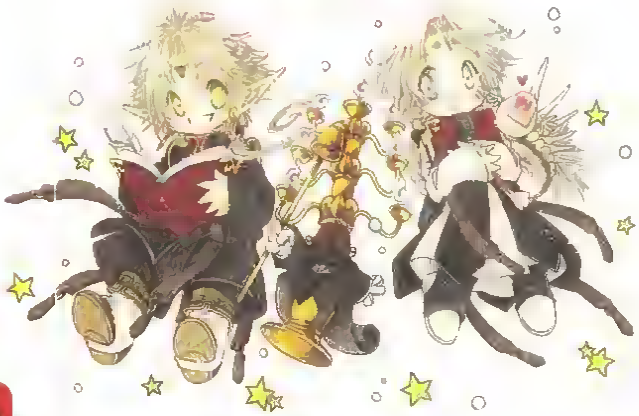

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